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# DRUGGING A NATION

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The Story of China and the  
Opium Curse

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by  
Samuel Merwin

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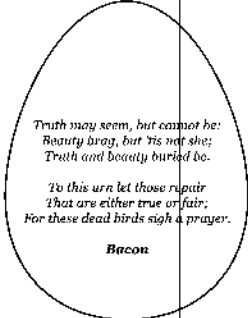
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*Truth may seem, but cannot be:  
Beauty drag, but 'tis not she;  
Truth and beauty buried be.*

*To this urn let those repair  
That are either true or fair;  
For these dead birds sigh a prayer.*

**Bacon**







# DRUGGING A NATION







H. E. TONG SHAO-I

One of the Leaders of the Opium Reform  
Movement in China

# Drugging a Nation

## The Story of China and the Opium Curse

A Personal Investigation, during an  
Extended Tour, of the Present Con-  
ditions of the Opium Trade in China  
and Its Effects upon the Nation

By  
SAMUEL MERWIN





## NOTE

THESE chapters were originally published during 1907 and 1908 in *Success Magazine*. Though frankly journalistic in tone, the book presents something more than the hasty conclusions of a journalist. During its preparation the author travelled around the world, inquiring into the problem at first hand in China and in England, reading all available printed matter which seemed to bear in any way on the subject, and interviewing several hundred gentlemen who have had special opportunities to study the problem from various standpoints. The writing was not begun until this preliminary work was completed and the natural conclusions had become convictions in the author's mind.





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# Drugging a Nation

## I

### CHINA'S PREDICAMENT

**I**N September, 1906, an edict was issued from the Imperial Court at Peking which states China's predicament with naïveté and vigour.

"The cultivation of the poppy," runs the edict, in the authorized translation, "is the greatest iniquity in agriculture, and the provinces of Szechuen, Shensi, Kansu, Yunnan, Kweichow, Shansi, and Kianghuai abound in its product, which, in fact, is found everywhere. Now that it is decided to abandon opium smoking within ten years, the limiting of this cultivation should be taken as a fundamental step . . . opium has been in use so long by the people that nearly three-tenths or four-tenths of them are smokers."

"Three-tenths or four-tenths" of the Chinese people,—one hundred and fifty million opium-smokers—mean three or four times the popula-

tion of Great Britain, a good many more than the population of the United States!

The Chinese are notoriously inexact in statistical matters. The officials who drew up the edict probably wished to convey the impression that the situation is really grave, and employed this form of statement in order to give force to the document. No accurate estimate of the number of opium victims in China is obtainable; but it is possible to combine the impressions which have been set down by reliable observers in different parts of the "Middle Kingdom," and thus to arrive at a fair, general impression of the truth. The following, for example, from Mr. Alexander Hosie, the commercial attaché to the British legation at Peking, should carry weight. He is reporting on conditions in Szechuen Province:

"I am well within the mark when I say that in the cities fifty per cent. of the males and twenty per cent. of the females smoke opium, and that in the country the percentage is not less than twenty-five for men and five per cent. for women." There are about forty-two million people in Szechuen Province; and they not only raise and consume a very great quantity of opium, they also send about twenty thousand tons down the

Yangtse River every year for use in other provinces. The report of other travellers, merchants, and official investigators indicate that about all of the richest soil in Szechuen is given over to poppy cultivation, and that the labouring classes show a noticeable decline of late in physique and capacity for work.

In regard to another so-called "opium province," Yunnan, we have the following statement: "I saw practically the whole population given over to its abuse. The ravages it is making in men, women, and children are deplorable. . . . I was quite able to realize that any one who had seen the wild abuse of opium in Yunnan would have a wild abhorrence of it."

In later chapters we shall go into the matter more at length. Here let me add to these statements merely a few typical scraps of information, selected from a bundle of note-books full of records of chats and interviews with travellers of almost every nationality and of almost every station in life. The secretary of a life insurance company which does a considerable business up and down the coast told me that, roughly, fifty per cent. of the Chinese who apply for insurance are opium-smokers. Another bit comes from a

man who lived for several years in an inland city of a quarter of a million inhabitants. The local Anti-opium League had 750 members, he said and he believed that about every other man in the city was a smoker. "It is practically a case of everybody smoking," he concluded.

Twenty-five years ago, when the consumption of opium in China could hardly have been more than half what it is to-day, a British consul estimated the proportion of smokers in the region he had visited as follows: "Labourers and small farmers, ten per cent.; small shopkeepers, twenty per cent.; soldiers, thirty per cent.; merchants, eighty per cent.; officials and their staff, ninety per cent.; actors, prostitutes, vagrants, thieves, ninety-five per cent." The labourers and farmers, the real strength of China, as of every other land, had not yet been overwhelmed—but they were going under, even then. The most startling news to-day is from these lower classes, even from the country villages, the last to give way. Dr. Parker, the American Methodist missionary at Shanghai, informed me that reports to this effect were coming in steadily from up country; and during my own journey I heard the same bad news almost everywhere along a route which



measured, before I left China, something more than four thousand miles.

Perhaps the most convincing summing up of China's predicament is found in another translation from a recent Chinese document, this time an appeal to the throne from four viceroys. The quaintness of the language does not, I think, impair its effectiveness and its power as a protest: "China can never become strong and stand shoulder and shoulder with the powers of the world unless she can get rid of the habit of opium-smoking by her subjects, about one quarter of whom have been reduced to skeletons and look half-dead."

This then is the curse which the imperial government has talked so quaintly of "abandoning." This is the debauchery which is to be put down by officials, ninety per cent. of whom were supposed to be more or less confirmed smokers. Such almost childlike optimism brings to mind a certain Sunday in New York City when Theodore Roosevelt, with the whole police force under his orders, tried to close the saloons. It brings to mind other attempts in Europe and America, to check and control vice and depravity—attempts which have never, I think, been wholly

successful—and one begins to understand the discouraging immensity of the task which China has undertaken. Really, to “stop using opium” would mean a very rearranging of the agricultural plan of the empire. It would make necessary an immediate solution of China’s transportation problem (no other crop is so easy to carry as opium) and an almost complete reconstruction of the imperial finances; indeed, few observers are so glib as to suggest off hand a substitute for the immense opium revenue to the Chinese government. And nobody to accomplish all this but those sodden officials, of whom it is safe to guess that fifty per cent. have some sort or other of a financial stake in the traffic!

In the minds of most of us, I think, there has been a vague notion that the Chinese have always smoked opium, that opium is in some peculiar way a necessity to the Chinese constitution. Even among those who know the extraordinary history of this morbidly fascinating vegetable product, who know that the India-grown British drug was pushed and smuggled and bayoneted into China during a century of desperate protest and even armed resistance from these yellow people, it has been a popular argument to assert

that the Chinese have only themselves to blame for the "demand" that made the trade possible. Of this "demand," and of how it was worked up by Christian traders, we shall speak at some length in later chapters. "Educational methods" in the extending of trade can hardly be said to have originated with the modern trust. The curious fact is that the Chinese didn't use opium and didn't want opium.

Your true opium-smoker stretches himself on a divan and gives up ten or fifteen minutes to preparing his thimbleful of the brown drug. When it has been heated and worked to the proper consistency, he places it in the tiny bowl of his pipe, holds it over a lamp, and draws a few whiffs of the smoke deep into his lungs. It seems, at first, a trivial thing; indeed, the man who is well fed and properly housed and clothed seems able to keep it up for a considerable time and without appreciable ill results. The greater difficulty in China is, of course, that very few opium-smokers are well fed and properly housed and clothed.

I heard little about the beautiful dreams and visions which opium is supposed to bring; all the smokers with whom I talked could be roughly

divided into two classes—those who smoked in order to relieve pain or misery, and those miserable victims who smoked to relieve the acute physical distress brought on by the opium itself. Probably the majority of the victims take it up as a temporary relief; many begin in early childhood; the mother will give the baby a whiff to stop its crying. It is a social vice only among the upper classes. The most notable outward effect of this indulgence is the resulting physical weakness and lassitude. The opium-smoker cannot work hard; he finds it difficult to apply his mind to a problem or his body to a task. As the habit becomes firmly fastened on him, there is a perceptible weakening of his moral fibre; he shows himself unequal to emergencies which make any sudden demand upon him. If opium is denied him, he will lie and steal in order to obtain it.

Opium-smoking is a costly vice. A pipefull of a moderately good native product costs more than a labourer can earn in a day; consequently the poorer classes smoke an unspeakable compound based on pipe scrapings and charcoal. Along the highroads the coolies even scrape the grime from the packsaddles to mix with this

dross. The clerk earning from twenty-five to fifty Mexican dollars a month will frequently spend from ten to twenty dollars a month on opium. The typical confirmed smoker is a man who spends a considerable part of the night in smoking himself to sleep, and all the next morning in sleeping off the effects. If he is able to work at all, it is only during the afternoon, and even at that there will be many days when the official or merchant is incompetent to conduct his affairs. Thousands of prominent men are ruined every year.

The Cantonese have what they call "The Ten Cannots regarding The Opium-Smoker," "He cannot (1) give up the habit; (2) enjoy sleep; (3) wait for his turn when sharing his pipe with his friends; (4) rise early; (5) be cured if sick; (6) help relations in need; (7) enjoy wealth; (8) plan anything; (9) get credit even when an old customer; (10) walk any distance."

This is the land into which the enterprising Christian traders introduced opium, and into which they fed opium so persistently and forcibly that at last a "good market" was developed. England did not set out to ruin China. One finds no hint of a diabolical purpose to seduce

and destroy a wonderful old empire on the other side of the world. The ruin worked was incidental to that far Eastern trade of which England has been so proud. It was the triumph of the balance sheet over common humanity.

And so it is to-day. British India still holds the cream of the trade, for the Chinese grown opium cannot compete in quality with the Indian drug. The British Indian government raises the poppy in the rich Ganges Valley (more than six hundred thousand acres of poppies they raised there last year), manufactures it in government factories at Patna and Ghazipur—manufactures four-fifths of it especially to suit the Chinese taste, and sells it at annual government auctions in Calcutta.

The result of this traffic is so very grave that it is a difficult matter to discuss in moderate language. To the traveller who leaves the railroad and steamboat lines and ventures, in springless native cart or swaying mule litter, along the sunken roads and the hills of western and north-western China, the havoc and misery wrought by the "white man's smoke," the "foreign dust," becomes unpleasantly evident. Some hint of the meaning of it, a faint impression of the terrible

devastation of this drug—let loose, as it has been, on a backward, poverty-stricken race—is seared, hour by hour and day by day into his brain.

A terrible drama is now being enacted in the Far East. The Chinese race is engaged in a fight to a finish with a drug—and the odds are on the drug.

## II

### THE GOLDEN OPIUM DAYS

**I**N the splendid, golden days of the East India Company, the great Warren Hastings put himself on record in these frank words:

“Opium is a pernicious article of luxury, which ought not to be permitted but for the purpose of foreign commerce only.” The new traffic promised to solve the Indian fiscal problem, if skillfully managed; accordingly, the production and manufacture of opium was made a government monopoly. China, after all, was a long way off—and Chinamen were only Chinamen. That the East India Company might be loosing an uncontrollable monster not only on China but on the world hardly occurred to the great Warren Hastings—the British chickens might, a century later, come home to roost in Australia and South Africa was too remote a possibility even for speculative inquiry.

Now trade supports us, governs us, controls our dependencies, represents us at foreign courts,



carries on our wars, signs our treaties of peace. Trade, like its symbol the dollar, is neither good nor bad; it has no patriotism, no morals, no humanity. Its logic applies with the same relentless force and precision to corn, cotton, rice, wheat, human slaves, oil, votes, opium. It is the power that drives human affairs; and its law is the law of the balance sheet. So long as any commodity remains in the currents of trade the law of trade must reign, the balance sheet must balance. It is difficult to get a commodity into these currents, but once you have got the commodity in, you will find it next to impossible to get it out. There has been more than one prime minister, I fancy, more than one secretary of state for India, who has wished the opium question in Jericho. It is not pleasant to answer the moral indignation of the British empire with the cynical statement that the India government cannot exist without that opium revenue. Why, oh, why, did not the great Warren Hastings develop the cotton rather than the opium industry! But the interesting fact is that he did not. He chose opium, and opium it is.

The India Government Opium Monopoly is an import factor in this extraordinary story of a

debauchery of a third of the human race by the most nearly Christian among Christian nations. We must understand what it is and how it works before we can understand the narrative of that greed, with its attendant smuggling, bribery and bloodshed which has brought the Chinese empire to its knees. In speaking of it as a "monopoly," I am not employing a cant word for effect. I am not making a case. That is what it is officially styled in a certain blue book on my table which bears the title, "Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress of India during the year 1905-6," and which was ordered by the House of Commons, to be printed, May 10th, 1907.

It is easy, with or without evidence, to charge a great corporation or a great government with inhuman crimes. If the charge be unjust it is difficult for the corporation or the government to set itself right before the people. Six truths cannot overtake one lie. That is why, in this day of popular rule, the really irresponsible power that makes and unmakes history lies in the hands of the journalist. As the charge I am bringing is so serious as to be almost unthinkable, and as I wish to leave no loophole for the counter-charge

that I am colouring this statement, I think I can do no better than to lift my description of the Opium Monopoly bodily from that rather ponderous blue book.

There is nothing new in this charge, nothing new in the condition which invites it. It is rather a commonplace old condition. Millions of men, for more than a hundred years, have taken it for granted, just as men once took piracy for granted, just as men once took the African slave-trade for granted, just as men to-day take the highly organized traffic in unfortunate women and girls for granted. Ask a Tory political leader of to-day—Mr. Balfour say—for his opinion on the opium question, and if he thinks it worth his while to answer you at all he will probably deal shortly with you for dragging up an absurd bit of fanaticism. For a century or more, about all the missionaries, and goodness knows how many other observers, have protested against this monstrous traffic in poison. Sixty-five years ago Lord Ashley (afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury) agitated the question in Parliament. Fifty years ago he obtained from the Law Officers of the Crown the opinion that the opium trade was "at variance" with the "spirit and intention" of the treaty be-

tween England and China. In 1891, the House of Commons decided by a good majority that "the system by which the Indian opium revenue is raised is morally indefensible." And yet, I will venture to believe that to most of my readers, British as well as American, the bald statement that the British Indian government actually manufactures opium on a huge scale in its own factories to suit the Chinese taste comes with the force of a shock. It is not the sort of a thing we like to think of as among the activities of an Anglo-Saxon government. It would seem to be government ownership with a vengeance.

Now, to get down to cases, just what this Government Opium Monopoly is, and just how does it work? An excerpt from the rather ponderous blue book will tell us. It may be dry, but it is official and unassailable. It is also short.

"The opium revenue"—thus the blue book—"is partly raised by a monopoly of the production of the drug in Bengal and the United Provinces, and partly by the levy of a duty on all opium imported from native states. . . . In these two provinces, the crop is grown under the control of a government department, which arranges the total area which is to be placed under the

crop, with a view to the amount of opium required."

So much for the broader outline. Now for a few of the details :

"The cultivator of opium in these monopoly districts receives a license, and is granted advances to enable him to prepare the land for the crop, and he is required to deliver the whole of the product at a fixed price to opium agents, by whom it is dispatched to the government factories at Patna and Ghazipur."

This money advanced to the cultivator bears no interest. The British Indian government lends money without interest in no other cases. Producers of crops other than opium are obliged to get along without free money.

When it has been manufactured, the opium must be disposed of in one way and another ; accordingly :

"The supply of prepared opium required for consumption in India is made over to the Excise Department. . . . The chests of 'provision' opium, for export, are sold by auction at monthly sales, which take place at Calcutta." For the meaning of the curious term, "provision opium," we have only to read on a little further. "The

opium is received and prepared at the government factories, where the out-turn for the year included 8,774 chests of opium for the Excise Department, about 300 pounds of various opium alkaloids, thirty maunds of medical opium, and 51,770 chests of provision opium for the Chinese market." There are about 140 pounds in a chest. Four grains of opium, administered in one dose to a person unaccustomed to its use, is apt to prove fatal.

Last year the government had under poppy cultivation 654,928 acres. And the revenue to the treasury, including returns from auction sales, duties, and license fees, and deducting all "opium expenditures," was nearly \$22,000,000 (£4,486,562).

The best grade of opium-poppy bears a white blossom. One sees mauve and pink tints in a field, at blossom-time, but only the seeds from the white flowers are replanted. The opium of commerce is made from the gum obtained by gashing the green seed pod with a four-bladed knife. After the first gathering, the sod is gashed a second time, and the gum that exudes makes an inferior quality of opium. The raw opium from the country districts is sent down to the govern-





**KNEADING CRUDE OPIUM WITH OIL  
TO MAKE ROUND OR FLAT CAKES**



**MAKING ROUND CAKES OF OPIUM**



ment factories in earthenware jars, worked up in mixing vats, and made into balls about six or eight inches in diameter. The balls, after a thorough drying on wooden racks, are packed in chests and sent down to the auction.

The men who buy in the opium at these monthly auctions and afterwards dispose of it at the Chinese ports are a curious crowd of Parsees, Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Asiatic Jews. Few British names appear in the opium trade to-day. British dignity prefers not to stoop beneath the taking in of profits; it leaves the details of a dirty business to dirty hands. This is as it has been from the first. The directors of the East India Company, years and years before that splendid corporation relinquished the actual government of India, forbade the sending of its specially-prepared opium direct to China, and advised a trading station on the coast whence the drug might find its way, "without the company being exposed to the disgrace of being engaged in an illicit commerce."

So clean hands and dirty hands went into partnership. They are in partnership still, save that the most nearly Christian of governments has officially succeeded the company as party of the

first part. And sixty-five tons of Indian opium go to China every week.

As soon as the shipments of opium have reached Hongkong and Shanghai (I am quoting now in part from a straightforward account by the Rev. T. G. Selby), they are broken up and pass in the ordinary courses of trade into the hands of retail dealers. The opium balls are stripped of the dried leaves in which they have been packed, torn like paste dumplings into fragments, put into an iron pan filled with water and boiled over a slow fire. Various kinds of opium are mixed with each other, and some shops acquire a reputation for their ingenious and tasteful blends. After the opium has been boiled to about the consistency of coal tar or molasses, it is put into jars and sold for daily consumption in quantities ranging from the fiftieth part of an ounce to four or five ounces. "I am sorry to say," observes Mr. Selby, "that the colonial governments of Hongkong and Singapore, not content with the revenue drawn from this article by the Anglo-Indian government, have made opium boiling a monopoly of the Crown, and a large slice of the revenue of these two Eastern dependencies is secured by selling the exclusive

rights to farm this industry to the highest bidder."

The most Mr. Clean Hands has been able to say for himself is that, "Opium is a fiscal, not a moral question;" or this, that "In the present state of the revenue of India, it does not appear advisable to abandon so important a source of revenue." After all, China is a long way off. So much for Mr. Clean Hands! His partner, Dirty Hands, is more interesting. It is he who has "built up the trade." It is he who has carried on the smuggling and the bribing and knifing and shooting and all-round, strong-arm work which has made the trade what it is. To be sure, as we get on in this narrative we shall not always find the distinction between Clean and Dirty so clear as we would like. Through the dust and smoke and red flame of all that dirty business along "the Coast" we shall glimpse for an instant or so, now and then, a face that looks distressingly like the face of old Respectability himself. I have found myself in momentary bewilderment when walking through the splendid masonry-lined streets of Hongkong, when sitting beneath the frescoed ceiling of that pinnacled structure that houses the most nearly Christian

of parliaments, trying to believe that this opium drama can be real. And I have wondered, and puzzled, until a smell like the smell of China has come floating to the nostrils of memory; until a picture of want and disease and misery—of crawling, swarming human misery unlike anything which the untravelled Western mind can conceive—has appeared before the eyes of memory. I have thought of those starving thousands from the famine districts creeping into Chinkiang to die, of those gaunt, seemed faces along the highroad that runs southwestward from Peking to Sian-fu; I have thought of a land that knows no dentistry, no surgery, no hygiene, no scientific medicine, no sanitation; of a land where the smallpox is a lesser menace beside the leprosy, plague, tuberculosis, that rage simply at will, and beside famines so colossal in their sweep, that the overtaxed Western mind simply refuses to comprehend them. And De Quincey's words have come to me: "What was it that drove me into the habitual use of opium? Misery—blank desolation—settled and abiding darkness——?" These words help to clear it up. China was a wonderful field, ready prepared for the ravages of opium

—none better. The mighty currents of trade did the rest. The balance sheet reigned supreme as by right. The balance sheet reigns to-day.

But we must get on with our narrative. I will try to pass it along in the form in which it has presented itself to me. If Clean and Dirty appear in closer and more puzzling alliance than we like to see them, I cannot help that.

It was not easy getting opium, the commodity, into the currents of trade. There was an obstacle. The Chinese were not an opium-consuming race. They did not use opium, they did not want opium, they steadily resisted the inroads of opium. But the rulers of the company were far-seeing men. Tempt misery long enough and it will take to opium. Two centuries ago when small quantities of the drug were brought in from Java, the Chinese government objected. In 1729 the importation was prohibited. As late as 1765, this importation, carried on by energetic traders in spite of official resistance, had never exceeded two hundred chests a year. But with the advent of the company in 1773, the trade grew. In spite of a second Chinese prohibition in 1795, half-heartedly enforced by corrupt mandarins, the total for 1820 was 4,000 chests.

The Chinese government was faced not only with the possibility of a race debauchery but also with an immediate and alarming drain of silver from the country. The balance of the trade was against them. Either as an economic or moral problem, the situation was grave.

The smoking of opium began in China and is peculiar to the Chinese. The Hindoos and Malays eat it. Complicated and wide-spread as the smoking habit is to-day, it is a modern custom as time runs in China. There seems to be little doubt in the minds of those Sinologues who have traced the opium thread back to the tangle of early missionary reports and imperial edicts, that the habit started either in Formosa or on the mainland across the Straits, where malaria is common. Opium had been used, generations before, as a remedy for malaria; and these first smokers seem to have mixed a little opium with their tobacco, which had been introduced by the Portuguese in the early seventeenth century. From this beginning, it would appear, was developed the rather elaborate outfit which the opium-smoker of to-day considers necessary to his pleasure.

Nothing but solid Anglo-Saxon persistence

had enabled the company to build up the trade. Seven years after their first small adventure, or in 1780, a depot of two small receiving hulks was established in Lark's Bay, south of Macao. A year later the company freighted a ship to Canton, but finding no demand were obliged to sell the lot of 1,600 chests at a loss to Sinqua, a Canton "Hong-merchant," who, not being able to dispose of it to advantage, reshipped it. The price in that year was \$550 (Mexican) a chest; Sinqua had paid the company only \$200, but even at a bargain he found no market. Meantime, in the words of a "memorandum," prepared by Joshua Rowntree for the debate in parliament last year, "British merchants spread the habit up and down the coast; opium store-ships armed as fortresses were moored at the mouth of the Canton River."

In 1782, the company's supercargoes at Canton wrote to Calcutta: "The importation of opium being strongly prohibited by the Chinese government, and a business altogether new to us, it was necessary for us to take our measures (for disposing of a cargo) with the utmost caution."

This "business altogether new to us" was, of course, plain smuggling. From the first it had

been necessary to arm the smuggling vessels; and as these grew in number the Chinese sent out an increasing number of armed revenue junks or cruisers. The traders usually found it possible to buy off the commanders of the revenue junks, but as this could not be done in every case it was inevitable that there should be encounters now and then, with occasional loss of life. These affrays soon became too frequent to be ignored.

Meantime the British government had succeeded the company in the rule of India and the control of the far Eastern trade. As this trade was from two-thirds to four-fifths opium, a prohibited article, and as the whole question of trade was complicated by the fact that China was ignorant of the greatness and power of the Western nations and did not care to treat or deal with them in any event, a government trade agent had been sent out to Canton to look after British interests and in general to fill the position of a combined consul and un-accredited minister. In the late 1830's this agent, Captain Charles Elliot (successor to Lord Napier, the first agent), found himself in the delicate position of protecting English smugglers,



who were steadily drawing their country towards war because the Chinese government was making strong efforts to drive them out of business. From what Captain Elliot has left on record it is plain that he was having a bad time of it. In 1837, he wrote to Lord Palmerston of "the wide-spreading public mischief" arising from "the steady continuance of a vast, prohibited traffic in an article of vicious luxury," and suggested that "a gradual check to our own growth and imports would be salutary." Two years later he wrote that "the Chinese government have a just ground for harsh measures towards the lawful trade, upon the plea that there is no distinction between the right and the wrong."

He even said: "No man entertains a deeper detestation of the disgrace and sin of this forced traffic;" and, "I see little to choose between it and piracy." But when the war cloud broke, and responsibility for the welfare of Britain's subjects and trade interests in China devolved upon him, he compromised. "It does not consort with my station," he wrote, "to sanction measures of general and undistinguishing violence against His Majesty's officers and subjects."

It will be interesting before we consider the opium war and its immense significance in history, to glance over the attitude of the company and later of its successor, the government, towards the whole miserable business. The company's board of directors, in 1817, had sent this dispatch from Calcutta in answer to a question, "Were it possible to prevent the using of the drug altogether, except strictly for the purpose of medicine, we would gladly do it in compassion to mankind."

It would be pleasant to believe that the East India Company was sincere in this ineffective if well-phrased expression of "compassion." The spectacle of a great corporation in any century giving up a lucrative traffic on merely human and moral grounds would be illuminating and uplifting. But unfortunate business corporations are, in their very nature, slaves of the balance sheet, organized representatives of the mighty laws of trade. I have already quoted enough evidence to show that the company was not only awake to the dangers of opium, but that it had deliberately and painstakingly worked up the traffic. Had there been, then, a change of heart in the directorate? I fear not. Among the

East Indian correspondence of 1830, this word from the company's governor-general came to light: "We are taking measures for extending the cultivation of the poppy, with a view to a larger increase in the supply of opium." And in this same year, 1830, a House of Commons committee reported that "The trade, which is altogether contraband, has been largely extended of late years."

G. H. M. Batten, a former official of the Indian Civil Service, who contributed the chapter on opium in Sir John Strachey's work on "India, its Administration and Progress," has been regarded of late years as one of the ablest defenders of the whole opium policy. He believes that "The daily use of opium in moderation is not only harmless but of positive benefit, and frequently even a necessity of life." This man, seeing little but good in opium, doubts "if it ever entered into the conception of the court of directors to suppress in the interests of morality the cultivation of the poppy."

Perhaps the most striking testimony bearing against the policy of the company was that given by Robert Inglis, of Canton, a partner in the large opium-trading firm of Dent & Co., to the

Select Committee on China Trade (House of Commons, 1840). Here it is:

Mr. Inglis.—“ I told him (Captain Elliot) that I was sure the thing could not go on.”

Mr. Gladstone.—“ How long ago have you told him that you were sure the thing could not go on ? ”

Mr. Inglis.—“ For four or five years past.”

Chairman.—“ What gave you that impression ? ”

Mr. Inglis.—“ An immense quantity of opium being forced upon the Chinese every year, and that in its turn forcing it up the coast in our vessels.”

Chairman.—“ When you use the words ‘ forcing it upon them,’ do you mean that they were not voluntary purchasers ? ”

Mr. Inglis.—“ No, but the East India Company were increasing the quantity of opium almost every year, without reference to the demand in China ; that is to say, there was always an immense supply of opium in China, and the company still kept increasing the quantity at lower prices.”

Three years later, just after the war, Sir George Staunton, speaking from experience as a British

official in the East, said in the House of Commons, "I never denied the fact that if there had been no opium smuggling there would have been no war.

"Even if the opium habit had been permitted to run its natural course, if it had not received an extraordinary impulse from the measures taken by the East India Company to promote its growth, which almost quadrupled the supply, I believe it would never have created that extraordinary alarm in the Chinese authorities which betrayed them into the adoption of a sort of *coup d'état* for its suppression."

Sir William Muir, some time lieutenant-governor of the Northwest Provinces of India, is on record thus: "By increasing its supply of 'provision' opium, it (the Bengal government) has repeatedly caused a glut in the Chinese market, a collapse of prices in India, an extensive bankruptcy and misery in Malwa."

The most interesting summing-up of the whole question I have seen is from the pen of Sir Arthur Cotton, who wrote after sixty years' experience in Indian affairs, protesting against "continuing this trading upon the sins and miseries of the greatest nation in the world in respect of

population, on the ground of our needing the money."

What was China doing to protect herself from these aggressions? The British merchants and the British trade agent had by this time worked into the good-will of the Chinese merchants and the corrupt mandarins, and had finally established their residence at Canton and their depot of store-ships at Whampoa, a short journey down the river. In 1839 there were about 20,000 chests of opium stored in these hulks. In that same year the Chinese emperor sent a powerful and able official named Lin Tse-hsu from Peking to Canton with orders to put down the traffic at any cost. Commissioner Lin was a man of unusual force. He perfectly understood the situation in so far as it concerned China. He had his orders. He knew what they meant. He proposed to put them into effect. There was only one important consideration which he seems to have overlooked—it was that India "needed the money." His proposal that the foreign agents deliver up their stores of "the prohibited article" did not meet with an immediate response. The traders had not the slightest notion of yielding up 20,000 chests of opium, worth, at that time,

\$300 a chest. Lin's appeals to the most nearly Christian of queens, were no more successful. He did not seem to understand that China was a long way off; it was very close to him. Here is a translation of what he had to say. To our eyes to-day, it seems fairly intelligent, even reasonable:

"Though not making use of it one's self, to venture on the manufacture and sale of it (opium) and with it to seduce the simple folk of this land is to seek one's own livelihood by the exposure of others to death. Such acts are bitterly abhorrent to the nature of man and are utterly opposed to the ways of heaven. We would now then concert with your 'Hon. Sovereignty' means to bring a perpetual end to this opium traffic so hurtful to mankind, we in this land forbidding the use of it and you in the nations under your dominion forbidding its manufacture."

Her "Hon. Sovereignty," if she ever saw this appeal (which may be doubted), neglected to reply. Meeting with small consideration from the traders, as from their sovereign, Commissioner Lin set about carrying out his orders. There was an admirable thoroughness in his methods. He surrounded the residence of the

traders, Captain Elliot's among them, with an army of howling, drum-beating Chinese soldiers, and again proposed that they deliver up those 20,000 chests. Now, the avenues of trade do not lead to martyrdom. Traders rarely die for their principles—they prefer living for them. The 20,000 chests were delivered up, with a rapidity that was almost haste; and the merchants, under the leadership of the agent, withdrew to the doubtful shelter of their own guns, down the river. Commissioner Lin, still with that exasperatingly thorough air, mixed the masses of opium with lime and emptied it into the sea. England, her dignity outraged, hurt at her tenderest point, sent out ships, men and money. She seized port after port; bombarded and took Canton; swept victoriously up the Yangtse, and by blocking the Grand Canal at Chinkiang interrupted the procession of tribute junks sailing up the Peking and thus cut off an important source of the Chinese imperial revenue. This resulted in the treaty of Nanking, in 1843, which was negotiated by the British government by Sir Henry Pottinger.

Sir Henry, like Commissioner Lin, had his orders. His methods, like Lin's, were admirable in their thoroughness. He secured the following



terms from the crestfallen Chinese government:

1. There was to be a "lasting peace" between the two nations.
2. Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai were to be open as "treaty ports."
3. The Island of Hongkong was to be ceded to Great Britain.
4. An indemnity of \$21,000,000 was to be paid, \$6,000,000 as the value of the opium destroyed, \$3,000,000 for the destruction of the property of British subjects, and \$12,000,000 for the expenses of the war. It was further understood that the British were to hold the places they had seized until these and a number of other humiliating conditions were to be fulfilled. Thus was the energy and persistence of the opium smugglers rewarded. Thus began that partition of China which has been going on ever since. It is difficult to be a Christian when far from home.

It is difficult to get an admission even to-day, from a thorough-going British trader, that opium had anything to do with the war of 1840-43. He is likely to insist either that the war was caused by the refusal of Chinese officials to admit English representatives on terms of equality, or that it was caused by "the stopping of trade." There was, indeed, a touch of the naivety

Oriental in the attitude of China. To the Chinese official mind, China was the greatest of nations, occupying something like five-sixths of the huge flat disc called the world. England, Holland, Spain, France, Portugal, and Japan were small islands crowded in between the edge of China and the rim of the disc. That these small nations should wish to trade with "the Middle Kingdom" and to bring tribute to the "Son of Heaven," was not unnatural. But that the "Son of Heaven" must admit them whether he liked or not, and as equals, was preposterous. Stripping these notions of their quaint Orientalism, they boiled down to the simple principle that China recognized no law of earth or heaven which could force her to admit foreign traders, foreign ministers, or foreign religions if she preferred to live by herself and mind her own business. That China has minded her own business and does mind her own business is, I think, indisputable.

The notions which animated the English were equally simple. Stripped of their quaint Occidental shell of religion and respectability and theories of personal liberty, they seem to boil down to about this—that China was a great and

undeveloped market and therefore the trading nations had a right to trade with her willy-nilly, and any effective attempt to stop this trade was, in some vague way, an infringement of their rights as trading nations. In maintaining this theory, it is necessary for us to forget that opium, though a "commodity," was an admittedly vicious and contraband commodity, to be used "for purposes of foreign commerce only."

In providing that there should be a "lasting peace" between the two nations, it was probably the idea to insure British traders against attack, or rather to provide a technical excuse for reprisals in case of such attacks. But for some reason nothing whatever was said about opium in the treaty. Now opium was more than ever the chief of the trade. England had not the slightest notion of giving it up; on the contrary, opium shipments were increased and the smuggling was developed to an extraordinary extent. How a "lasting peace" was to be maintained while opium, the cause of all the trouble, was still unrecognized by either government as a legitimate commodity, while, indeed, the Chinese, however chastened and humiliated, were still making desperate if indirect

efforts to keep it out of the country and the English were making strong efforts to get it into the country, is a problem I leave to subtler minds. The upshot was, of course, that the "lasting peace" did not last. Within fifteen years there was another war. By the second treaty (that of Tientsin, 1858) Britain secured 4,000,000 taels of indemnity money (about \$3,000,000), the opening of five more treaty ports, toleration for the Christian religion, and the admission of opium under a specified tariff. The Tientsin Treaty legalized Christianity and opium. China had defied the laws of trade, and had learned her lesson. It had been a costly lesson—\$24,000,000 in money, thousands of lives, the fixing on the race of a soul-blighting vice, the loss of some of her best seaports, more, the loss of her independence as a nation—but she had learned it. And therefore, except for a crazy outburst now and then as the foreign grip grew tighter, she was to submit.

But China's trouble was not over. If she was to be debauched whether or no, must she also be ruined financially? There were the indemnity payments to meet, with interest; and no way of meeting them other than to squeeze tighter a

poverty-stricken nation which was growing more poverty-stricken as her silver drained steadily off to the foreigners. There was a solution to the problem—a simple one. It was to permit the growth of opium in China itself, supplant the Indian trade, keep the silver at home. But China was slow to adopt this solution. It might solve the fiscal problem; but incidentally it might wreck China. She sounded England on the subject,—once, twice. There seemed to have been some idea that England, convinced that China had her own possibility of crowding out the Indian drug, might, after all, give up the trade, stop the production in India, and make the great step unnecessary. But England could not see it in that light. China wavered, then took the great step. The restrictions on opium-growing were removed. This was probably a mistake, though opinions still differ about that. To the men who stood responsible for a solution of Chinese fiscal problem it doubtless seemed necessary. At all events, the last barrier between China and ruin was removed by the Chinese themselves. And within less than half a century after the native growth of the poppy began, the white and pink and mauve blossoms have spread across

the great empire, north and south, east and west, until to-day, in blossom-time almost every part of every province has its white and mauve patches. You may see them in Manchuria, on the edge of the great desert of Gobi, within a dozen miles of Peking; you may see them from the headwaters of the mighty Yangtse to its mouth, up and down the coast for two thousand miles, on the distant borders of Tibet.

No one knows how much opium was grown in China last year. There are estimates—official, missionary, consular; and they disagree by thousands and tens of thousands of tons. But it is known that where the delicate poppy is reared, it demands and receives the best land. It thrives in the rich river-bottoms. It has crowded out grain and vegetables wherever it has spread, and has thus become a contributing factor to famines. Its product, opium, has run over China like a black wave, leaving behind it a misery, a darkness, a desolation that has struck even the Chinese, even its victims, with horror. China has passed from misery to disaster. And as if the laws of trade had chosen to turn capriciously from their inexorable business and wreak a grim joke on a prostrate race, the solution, the great

step, has failed in its purpose. The trade in Indian opium has been hurt, to be sure, but not supplanted. It will never be supplanted until the British government deliberately puts it down. For the Chinese cannot raise opium which competes in quality with the Indian drug. Indian opium is in steady demand for the purpose of mixing with Chinese opium. No duties can keep it out; duties simply increase the cost to the Chinese consumer, simply ruin him a bit more rapidly. So authoritative an expert as Sir Robert Hart, director of the Chinese imperial customs, had hoped that the great step would prove effective. In "These from the Land of Sinim" he has expressed his hope:

"Your legalized opium has been a cure in every province it penetrates, and your refusal to limit or decrease the import has forced us to attempt a dangerous remedy—legalized native opium—not because we approve of it, but to compete with and drive out the foreign drug; and it is expelling it, and when we have only the native production to deal with, and thus have the business in our own hands, we hope to stop the habit in our own way."

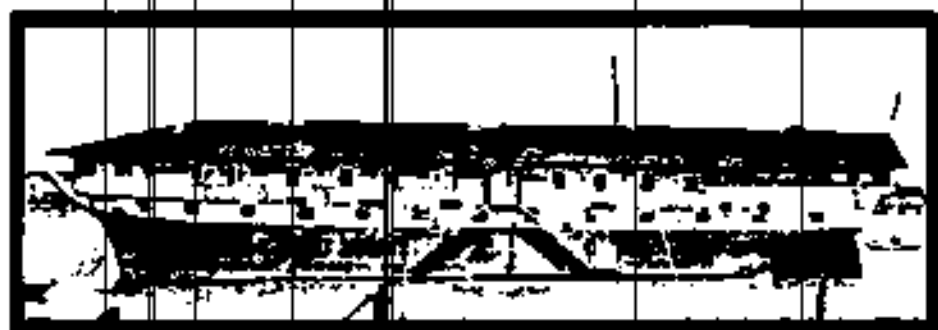
The great step has failed. Indian opium has

not been expelled. For the Chinese to put down the native drug without stopping the import is impossible as well as useless. The Chinese seem determined, in one way or another, to put down both. Once, again, after a weary century of struggle, they have approached the British government. Once again the British government has been driven from the Scylla of healthy Anglo-Saxon moral indignation to the Charybdis behind that illuminating phrase—"India needs the money." Twenty million dollars is a good deal of money. The balance sheet reigns; and the balance sheet is an exacting ruler, even if it has triumphed over common decency, over common morality, over common humanity.

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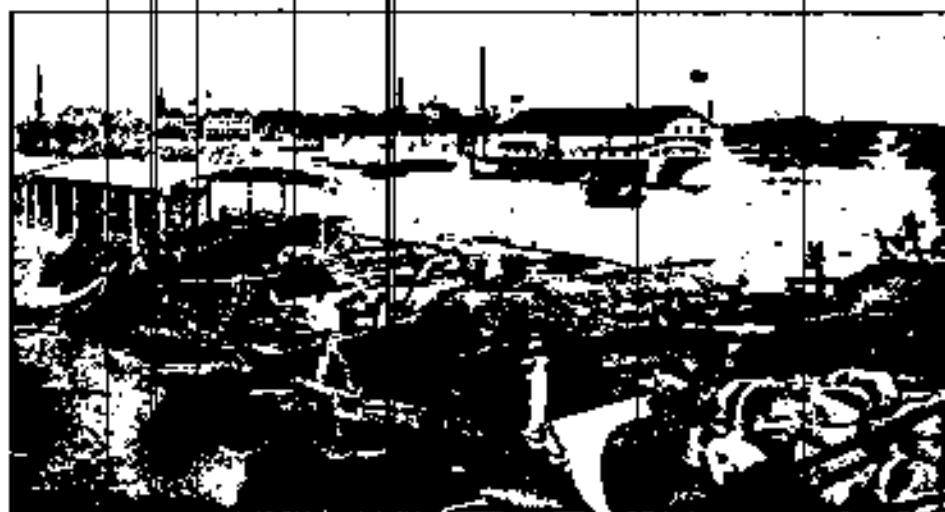
Will you ride with me (by rickshaw) along the International Bund at Shanghai—beyond the German Club and the Hongkong Bank—over the little bridge that leads to Frenchtown—past a half mile of warehouses and chanting coolies and big yellow Hankow steamers—until we turn out on the French Bund? It is a raw, cloudy, March morning; the vendors of queer edibles





**AN OPIUM RECEIVING SHIP OR "GODOWN"  
AT SHANGHAI**

The Imported Indian Opium is Stored in These Ships Until it  
Passes the Chinese Imperial Customs



**THE OPIUM HULKS OF SHANGHAI**  
"They Symbolize China's Degradation"



who line the curbing find it warmer to keep their hands inside their quilted sleeves.

It is a lively day on the river. Admiral Brownson's fleet of white cruisers lie at anchor in midstream. A lead-gray British cruiser swings below them, an anachronistic Chinese gunboat lower still. Big black merchantmen fill in the view—a P. and O. ship is taking on coal—a two-hundred-ton junk with red sails moves by. Nearer at hand, from the stone quay outward, the river front is crowded close with sampans and junks, rows on rows of them, each with its round little house of yellow matting, each with its swarm of brown children, each with its own pungent contribution to the all-pervasive odour. Gaze out through the forests of masts, if you please, and you will see two old hulks, roofed with what looks suspiciously like shingles, at anchor beyond. They might be ancient men-of-war, pensioned off to honourable decay. You can see the square outline of what once were port-holes, boarded up now. The carved, wooden figure-heads at the prow of each are chipped and blackened with age and weather. What are they and why do they lie here in mid-channel, where commerce surges about them?

These are the opium hulks of Shanghai. In them is stored the opium which the government of British India has grown and manufactured for consumption in China. They symbolize China's degradation.

### III

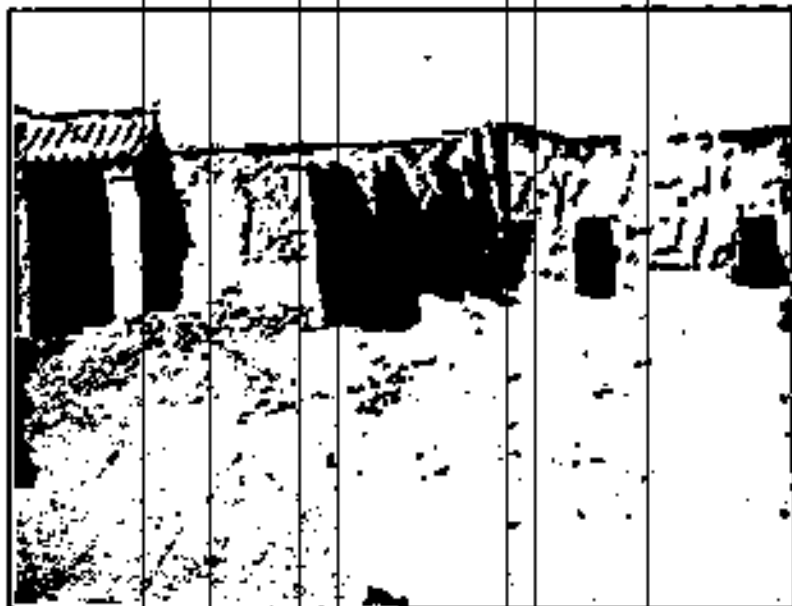
#### A GLIMPSE INTO AN OPIUM PROVINCE

**T**HE opium provinces of China—that is, the provinces which have been most nearly completely ruined by opium—lie well back in the interior. They cover, roughly, an area 1,200 miles long by half as wide, say about one-third the area of the United States; and they support, after a fashion, a population of about 160,000,000. There had been plenty of evidence obtainable at Shanghai, Hankow, Peking, and Tientsin, of the terrible ravages of opium in these regions, but it seemed advisable to make a journey into one of these unfortunate provinces and view the problem at short range. The nearest and most accessible was Shansi Province. It lies to the west and southwest of Peking, behind the blue mountains which one sees from the Hankow-Peking Railroad. There seemed to be no doubt that the opium curse could there be seen at its worst. Everybody said so—legation officials, attachés,

merchants, missionaries. Dr. Piell, of the London Mission hospital at Peking, estimated that ninety per cent. of the men, women, and children in Shansi smoke opium. He called in one of his native medical assistants, who happened to be a Shansi man, and the assistant observed, with a smile, that ninety per cent. seemed pretty low as an estimate. Another point in Shansi's favour was that the railroads were pushing rapidly through to T'ai Tuan-fu, the capital (and one of the oldest cities in oldest China). So I picked up an interpreter at the *Grand Hotel des Wagon-lits*, and went out there.

The new Shansi railroad was not completed through to Tai-Yuan-fu, the provincial capital, and it was necessary to journey for several days by cart and mule-litter. While this sort of travelling is not the most comfortable in the world, it has the advantage of bringing one close to the life that swarms along the highroad, and of making it easier to gather facts and impressions.

Every hour or so, as the cart crawls slowly along, you come upon a dusty gray village nestling in a hollow or clinging to the hillside. And nearly every village is a little more than a heap



**THE VILLAGES WERE LITTLE MORE THAN  
HEAPS OF RUINS**

**These Holes in the Ground are Occupied by Formerly  
Well-to-do Opium Smokers**



**AT LAST HE CRAWLS OUT ON THE HIGHWAY,  
WHINING, CHATTERING AND PRAYING THAT  
A FEW COPPER CASH BE THROWN TO HIM**





of ruins. I was prepared to find ruins, but not to such an extent. When I first drew John, the interpreter's, attention to them, he said, "Too much years." As an explanation this was not satisfactory, because many of the ruined buildings were comparatively new—certainly, too new to fall to pieces. At the second village John made another guess at the cause of such complete disaster. "Poor—too poor," he said, and then traced it back to the last famine, about which, he found, the peasants were still talking. "Whole lot o' mens die," he explained. It was later on that I got at the main contributing cause of the wreck and ruin which one finds almost everywhere in Shansi Province, after I had picked up, through John and his cook, the roadside gossip of many days during two or three hundred miles of travel, after I had talked with missionaries of life-long experience, with physicians who are devoting their lives to work among these misery-ridden people, with merchants, travellers, and Chinese and Manchu officials.

Before we take up in detail the ravages of opium throughout this and other provinces, I wish to say a word about one source of information, which every observer of conditions in

China finds, sooner or later, that he is forced to employ. Along the China coast one hears a good deal of talk about the "missionary question." Many of the foreign merchants abuse the missionaries. I will confess that the "anti-missionary" side had been so often and so forcibly presented to me that before I got away from the coast I unconsciously shared the prejudice. But now, brushing aside the exceptional men on both sides of the controversy, and ignoring for the moment the deeper significance of it, let me give the situation as it presented itself to me before I left China.

There are many foreign merchants who study the language, travel extensively, and speak with authority on things Chinese. But the typical merchant of the treaty port, that is, the merchant whom one hears so loudly abusing the missionaries, does not speak the language. He transacts most of his business through his Chinese "*Compradore*," and apparently divides the chief of his time between the club, the race-track, and various other places of amusement. This sort of merchant is the kind most in evidence, and it is he who contributes most largely to the anti-missionary feeling "back home." The mission-

## A Glimpse Into an Opium Province

aries, on the other hand, almost to a man, speak, read, and write one or more native dialects. They live among the Chinese, and, in order to carry on their work at all, they must be continually studying the traditions, customs, and prejudices of their neighbours. In almost every instance the missionaries who supplied me with information were more conservative than the British and American diplomatic, consular, military, and medical observers who have travelled in the opium provinces. I have since come to the conclusion that the missionaries are over-conservative on the opium question, probably because, being constantly under fire as "fanatics" and "enthusiasts," they unconsciously lean too far towards the side of under-statement. The published estimates of Dr. Du Bose, of Soochow, president of the Anti-opium League, are much more conservative than those of Mr. Alex Hosie, the British commercial *attaché* and former consul-general. Dr. Parker, of Shanghai, the gentleman of the London Mission, the American Board, and the American Presbyterian Missions at Peking, scores of other missionaries whom I saw in their homes in the interior or at the missionary conference at Shanghai, and Messrs.

Gaily, Robertson, and Lewis, of the International Young Men's Christian Association, all impressed me as men whose opinions were based on information and not on prejudice. Dr. Morrison, the able Peking correspondent of the *London Times*, said to me when I arrived at the capital, "You ought to talk with the missionaries." I did talk with them, and among many different sources of information I found them worthy of the most serious consideration.

The phrase, "opium province," means, in China, that an entire province (which, in extent and in political outline, may be roughly compared to one of the United States) has been ravaged and desolated by opium. It means that all classes, all ages, both sexes, are sodden with the drug; that all the richer soil, which in such densely-populated regions, is absolutely needed for the production of food, is given over to the poppy; that the manufacture of opium, of pipes, of lamps, and of the various other accessories, has become a dominating industry; that families are wrecked, that merchants lose their acumen, and labourers their energy; that after a period of wide-spread debauchery and enervation, economic, as well as moral and physical

disaster, settles down over the entire region. The population of these opium provinces ranges from fifteen or twenty million to eighty million.

"In Shansi," I have quoted an official as saying, "everybody smokes opium." Another cynical observer has said that "eleven out of ten Shansi men are opium-smokers." In one village an English traveller asked some natives how many of the inhabitants smoked opium, and one replied, indicating a twelve-year-old child, "That boy doesn't." Still another observer, an English scientist, who was born in Shansi, who speaks the dialect as well as he speaks English, and who travels widely through the remoter regions in search of rare birds and animals, puts the proportion of smokers as low as seventy-five per cent. of the total population. I had some talks with this man at Tai Yuan-fu, and later at Tientsin, and I found his information so precise and so interesting that I asked him one day to dictate to a stenographer some random observations on the opium problem in Shansi. These few paragraphs make up a very small part of what I have heard him and others say, but they are so grimly picturesque, and they give so accurately the sense of the mass of notes and inter-

views which fill my journal of the Shansi trip, that it has seemed to me I could do no better than to print them just as he talked them off on that particular day at Tientsin.

"The opium-growers always take the best piece of land," he said, "in their land—the best fertilized, and with the most water upon it. They find that it pays them a great deal better than growing wheat or anything else. Around Chao Cheng, especially, they grow opium to a large extent just beside the rivers, where they can get plenty of water. The seeds are sown about the beginning of May, and they have to be transplanted. It takes until about the middle of July before the opium ripens. Just before it is ripe men are employed to cut the seed pods, when a white sap exudes, and this dries upon the pod and turns brown, and in about a week after it has been cut they come around and scrape it off. The wages are from twenty to thirty cents (Mexican) per day. Men and women are employed in the work. The heads of the poppy are all cut off, when they are dried and stored away for the seed of the next year.

"It is a very fragile crop, and until it gets to be nine inches high it is very easily broken. The

full-grown poppy plant is from three to four feet high. The Chao Cheng opium is considered the best.

"In the Chao Cheng district the people have been more or less ruined by opium. I have heard of a family, a man and his wife, who had only one suit of clothes between them.

"In Taiku there is a large family by the name of Meng, perhaps the wealthiest family in the province of Shansi. For the past few years they have been steadily going down, simply from the fact that the heads of the family have become opium-smokers. In Taiku there is a large fair held each year, and all the old bronzes, porcelains, furniture, etc., that this family possesses are sold. Last year enough of their possessions were on sale to stock ten or twelve small shops at the fair.

"Another man, a rich man in Jen Tsuen, possessed a fine summer residence previous to 1900. This residence contained several large houses and some fine trees and shrubs, but during the last seven years he has taken to opium and has been steadily going down. He has been selling out this residence, pulling down the houses and cutting down the trees, and selling the wood and

old bricks. He is now a beggar in the streets of Jen Tsuen.

"All through the hills west of Tai Yuan-fu the peasants are addicted to the use of opium. About seventy per cent. of the population take opium in one form or another. I was speaking to a number of them who had come into an inn at which I was stopping. I asked them if they wanted to give up the use of opium. They said yes, but that they had not the means to do so. Everybody would like to give it up. The women smoke, as well as the men.

"The smoker does not trouble himself to plant seeds, nor to go out.

"The houses in Shansi are very good; in fact, they are better than in other provinces, but they are rapidly going to ruin owing to the excessive smoking of opium, and wherever one goes the ruins are seen on every side. On the roads the people can get a little money by selling things, but off the main roads the distress is worse than anywhere else.

"Up in the hills I stopped at a village and inquired if they had any food for sale, and they told me that they had nothing but frozen potatoes. So I asked to be shown those, and I went



into one of the hovels and found little potatoes, perhaps one-half an inch across, frozen, and all strewn over the *long* (the brick bed), where they were drying. As soon as they were dry, they were to be ground down into a meal of which dumplings were made, and these were steamed. That was their only diet, and had been for the past month. They had no money at all. What money they had possessed had been spent on opium, and they could not expect anything to make up the crop of potatoes the following autumn. I noticed in a basin a few dried sticks, and I asked what they were for, and the man told me they were the sticks taken from the sieve through which the opium was filtered for purification. These sticks are soaked in hot water, and the water, which contains a little opium, is drunk. They were using this in place of opium. I gave this man twenty cents, and the next day when I returned he was enjoying a pipe of opium.

"While passing through an iron-smelting village I noticed that the blacksmiths who beat up the pig iron were regular living skeletons. They work from about five in the morning until about five in the evening, stopping twice during that time for meals. When they leave off in the

evening, after a hasty meal they start with their pipes and go on until they are asleep. I do not know how these men can work. I presume that it was the hard work that made them take to opium-smoking.

"On asking people why they had taken to the drug, they invariably replied that it was for the cure of a pain of some sort—for relieving the suffering. The women often take to it after childbirth, and this is generally what starts them to smoking.

"The wealthier men who smoke opium nearly all day cannot enter another room until this room has first been filled with the fumes of opium. Some one has to go into the room first and smoke a few pipes, so that the air of the room may be in proper condition.

"There was an official in Shau-ying who used to keep six slave girls going all day filling his pipes. The slave girls and brides very often try to commit suicide by eating opium, owing to the harsh treatment they receive."

Everywhere along the highroad and in the cities and villages of Shansi you see the opium face. The opium-smoker, like the opium-eater, rapidly loses flesh when the habit has fixed itself

on him. The colour leaves his skin, and it becomes dry, like parchment. His eye loses whatever light and sparkle it may have had, and becomes dull and listless. The opium face has been best described as a "peculiarly withered and blasted countenance." With this face is usually associated a thin body and a languid gait. Opium gets such a powerful grip on a confirmed smoker that it is usually unsafe for him to give up the habit without medical aid. His appetite is taken away, his digestion is impaired, there is congestion of the various internal organs, and congestion of the lungs. Constipation and diarrhoea result, with pain all over the body. By the time he has reached this stage, the smoker has become both physically and mentally weak and inactive. With his intellect deadened, his physical and moral sense impaired, he sinks into laziness, immorality, and debauchery. He has lost his power of resistance to disease, and becomes predisposed to colds, bronchitis, diarrhoea, dysentery, and dyspepsia. Brigade Surgeon J. H. Condon, M. D., M. R. C. S., speaking of opium-eaters before the Royal Commission on Opium, said: "They become emaciated and debilitated, miserable-looking wretches, and finally die, most

commonly of diarrhoea induced by the use of opium."

When a man has got himself into this condition, he must have opium, and must have it all the time. I have already pointed out that opium-smoking not only is perhaps the most expensive of the vices, but that, unlike opium-eating, it consumes an immense amount of time. Few smokers can keep slaves to fill their pipes for them, like that wealthy official at Shau-ying. It takes a seasoned smoker from fifteen minutes to half an hour to prepare a pipe to his satisfaction, smoke it, and rouse himself to begin the operation again. If he smokes ten or twenty pipes a day, which is common, and then sleeps off the effects, it is not hard to figure out the number of hours left for business each day. When he has slept, and the day is well started, his body at once begins to clamour for more opium. He must begin smoking again, or he will suffer an agony of physical and mental torture. His ten to twenty pipes a day will cost him from fifty cents or a dollar (if he is a poor man and smokes the scrapings from the rich man's pipe), to ten or twenty dollars (or more, if he smokes a high grade of opium). I learned of

many wealthy merchants and officials who smoke from forty to sixty pipes a day.

It is just at this period, when the smoker is so enslaved by the drug that he has lost his earning power, that his opium expenditure increases most rapidly. He is buying opium now, not so much to gratify his selfish vice, as to keep himself alive. He becomes frantic for opium. He will sell anything he has to buy the stuff. His moral sense is destroyed. A diseased, decrepit, insane being, he forgets even his family. He sells his bric-à-brac, his pictures, his furniture. He sells his daughters, even his wife, if she has attractions, as slaves to rich men. He tears his house to pieces, sells the tiles of his roof, the bricks of his walls, the woodwork about his doors and windows. He cuts down the trees in his yard and sells the wood. And at last he crawls out on the highway, digs himself a cave in the loess (if he has strength enough), and prostrates himself before the camel and donkey drivers, whining, chattering, praying that a few copper cash be thrown to him.

Since there are no statistics in China, I can give the reader only the observations and impressions of a traveller. But Shansi Province is full of

ruins. So are Szechuan and Yunnan and Kueichow, and half a dozen others. It is with the province as a whole much as it is with the individuals of that province. The raising of opium to supply this enormous demand crowds off the land the grains and vegetables that are absolutely needed for human food. The manufacture of opium and its accessories absorbs the energy and capital that should go into legitimate industry. The government of the province and the government of the empire have become so dependent on the immense revenue from the taxation of this "vicious article of luxury" that they dare not give it up. In the body politic an unhealthy condition not only exists, but also controls. Drifting into it half-consciously, the province has been sapped by a vicious economic habit. That is what is the matter with Shansi. That is what is the matter with China. All the way along my route in Shansi I photographed the ruins that typify the disaster which has overtaken this opium province. And a few of these photographs are reproduced here, all showing houses of men who were well-to-do only a few years ago. It will be plainly seen from the cuts, I think, that these ruins are not the result of age.



## WRECK AND RUIN IN CHINA

These Houses were Torn Down by their Owners, the Woodwork and Bricks Sold, and the Money Used to Purchase Opium





## A Glimpse Into an Opium Province 69

The sun-dried bricks of the walls show few signs of crumbling. The walls themselves are not weather-beaten, and have evidently been destroyed by the hand of man, and not by time.

## IV

### CHINA'S SINCERITY

**C**HINA is the land of paradox. If it is an absolute, despotic monarchy, it is also a very democratic country, with its self-made men, its powerful public opinion, and a "states' rights" question of its own. It is one of the most corrupt of nations; on the other hand, the standard of personal and commercial honesty is probably higher in China than in any other country in the world. Woman, in China, is made to serve; her status is so low that it would be a discourtesy even to ask a man if he has a daughter: yet the ablest ruler China has had in many centuries is a woman. It is a land where the women wear socks and trousers, and the men wear stockings and robes; where a man shakes his own hand, not yours; where white, not black, is a sign of mourning; where the compass points south, not north; where books are read backward, not forward; where names and titles are put in reverse order, as in our directories—

Theodore Roosevelt would be Roosevelt Theodore in China, Uncle Sam would be Sam Uncle ; where fractions are written upside down, as  $\frac{1}{2}$ , not  $\frac{5}{6}$  ; where a bride wails bitterly as she is carried to her wedding, and a man laughs when he tells you of his mother's death.

Chinese life, or the phases of it that you see along the highroads of the northwest, would appear to be a very simple, honest life, industrious, methodical, patient in poverty. The men, even of the lowest classes, are courteous to a degree that would shame a Frenchman. I have seen my two soldiers, who earned ten or twenty cents, Mexican, a day, greet my cook with such grace and charm of manner that I felt like a crude barbarian as I watched them. The simplicity and industry of this life, as it presented itself to me, seemed directly opposed to any violence or outrage. Yet only seven years ago Shansi Province was the scene of one of the most atrocious massacres in history, modern or ancient. During a few weeks, in the summer of 1900, one hundred and fifty-nine white foreigners, men, women, and children, were killed within the province, forty-six of them in the city of T'ai Yuan-fu. The massacre completely wiped out the mission

churches and schools and the opium refuges, the only missionaries who escaped being those who happened to be away on leave at the time. The attack was not directed at the missionaries as such, but at the foreigners in general. It was widely believed among the peasantry that the foreign devils made a practice of cutting out the eyes, tongues, and various other organs of children and women and shipping them, for some diabolical purpose, out of the country. The slaughter was directed, from beginning to end, by the rabid Manchu governor, Yü Hsien, and some of the butchering was done by soldiers under his personal command. But the interesting fact is that the docile, long-suffering people of Shansi did some butchering on their own account, as soon as the word was passed around that no questions would be asked by the officials.

Apparently, the Shansi peasant can be at one time simple, industrious, loyal, and at another time a slaying, ravishing maniac. The Chinaman himself is the greatest paradox of all. He is the product of a civilization which sprang from a germ and has developed in a soil and environment different from anything within our Western range of experience. Naturally he does not see

human relations as we see them. His habits and customs are enough different from ours to appear bizarre to us ; but they are no more than surface evidences of the difference between his mind and ours. Thanks to our strong racial instinct, we can be fairly certain of what an Anglo-Saxon, or even a European, will think in certain deeply human circumstances—in the presence of death, for instance. We cannot hope to understand the mental processes of a Chinaman. There is too great a difference in the shape of our heads, as there is in the texture of our traditions.

But we can see quite clearly that the imperial government of China is, while it endures, a strong and effective government. It is significant that the Chinese people rarely indulge in massacres on their own account. Why not? The hatred of foreigners must be always there, under the placid surface, for these people rarely fail to turn into slaying demons once the officials let the word be passed around. There have been thirty-five serious anti-foreign riots and massacres in China within thirty-five years, besides the Boxer uprising of 1900 ; and among these there was probably not one which the mandarins could not have suppressed had they wished. The Boxer trouble

was worked up by Yü Hsien while he was governor of Shantung Province. When the foreign powers protested he was transferred to Shansi, which had scarcely heard of the Boxer Society, and almost at once there was a "Boxer" outbreak and massacre in Shansi. The Peking government meanwhile carried on Yü Hsien's horrible work at Peking and Tientsin. The siege of the legations at Peking was conducted by imperial soldiers, not by mobs. During all the trouble of that bloody summer, Yuan Shi K'ai, who succeeded to the governorship in Shantung, seemed to have no difficulty in keeping that province quiet, though it was the scene of the original trouble.

Chang Chi Tung, "the great viceroy," subdued the Upper Yangtse provinces with a firm hand, though the Boxer difficulty there was complicated by the ever-seething revolution. In a word, the officials in China seem perfectly able to control their populace and protect foreigners. As Dr. Ferguson, of Shanghai, put it to me, "No other government in the world can so effectively enforce a law as the Chinese government—when they want to!"

You soon learn, in China, that you can trust a

Chinaman to carry through anything he agrees to do for you. When I reached T'ai Yuan-fu I handed my interpreter a Chinese draft for \$200 (Mexican), payable to bearer, and told him to go to the bank and bring back the money. I had known John a little over a week; yet any one who knows China will understand that I was running no appreciable risk. The individual Chinaman is simply a part of a family, the family is part of a neighbourhood, the neighbourhood is part of a village or district, and so on. In all its relations with the central government, the province is responsible for the affairs of its larger districts, these for the smaller districts, the smaller districts for the villages, the villages for the neighbourhoods, the neighbourhoods for the family, the family for the individual. If John had disappeared with my money after cashing the draft, and had afterwards been caught, punishment would have been swift and severe. Very likely he would have lost his head. If the authorities had been unable to find John, they would have punished his family. Punishment would surely have fallen on somebody.

The real effect of this system, continued as it has been through unnumbered centuries, has

naturally been to develop a clear, keen sense of personal responsibility. For, whatever may occur, somebody is responsible. The family, in order to protect itself, trains its individuals to live up to their promises, or else not to make promises. The neighbourhood, well knowing that it will be held accountable for its units, watches them with a close eye. When a new family comes into a neighbourhood, the neighbours crowd about and ask questions which are not, in view of the facts, so impertinent as they might sound. Indeed, this sense of family and neighbourhood accountability is so deeply rooted that it is not uncommon, on the failure of a merchant to meet his obligations, for his family and friends to step forward and help him to settle his accounts. It is the only way in which they can clear themselves.

All these evidences would seem to indicate that the Chinese people, on the one hand, have an innate fear of and respect for their government and their law, such as they are; and that the government, on the other hand, is, in the matter of enforcing the traditional law, one of the most powerful governments on earth. None but an exceedingly well-organized government



could deliberately incite its people to repeated riots and massacres without losing control of them. The Chinese government has seemed to have not the slightest difficulty in keeping the people quiet—when it wanted to. The story of Shantung Province makes this clear. It was driven into what appeared to be anarchy by a rabid governor. But only a few months later this governor's successor had little difficulty in keeping the entire province in almost perfect order while the adjoining province was actually at war with the allied powers of the world and was overrun with foreign troops. No; a government which has within it the power, on occasion, to carry through such an achievement as this, can hardly be called weak.

We begin, then, by admitting that the Chinese government has the strength and the organization necessary to carry out any ordinary reform—if it wants to. The putting down of the opium evil is, of course, no ordinary reform. It is an undertaking so colossal and so desperate that it staggers imagination, as I trust I have made plain in the preceding articles. But setting aside, for the moment, our doubts as to whether or not the Chinese government, or any other

government on earth, could hope to check so insidious and pervading an evil, we have to consider other doubts which arise from even a slight acquaintance with that puzzling organism, the Chinese official mind. If the Chinese business man is, as many think, the most honest and straightforward business man on earth, the Chinese official, or mandarin, is about the most subtle and bewildering. His duplicity is simply beyond our understanding. He has a bland and childish smile, but his ways are peculiar. Most of us know that our own state department has a neat little custom of issuing letters to travellers ordering our diplomatic and consular representatives abroad to extend special courtesies, and sending, at the same time, a notice to these same representatives advising them to take no notice of the letters. In Chinese diplomacy everything is done in this way, but very much more so. Documents issued by the Chinese government usually bear about the same relation to any existing facts or intentions as a Thanksgiving proclamation does. You must be very astute, indeed, to perceive from the speech, manner, or writing of a mandarin what he is really getting at. Motive underlies motive; self-interest lies

deeper still; and the base of it all is an Oriental conception of life and affairs which cannot be so remodelled or reshaped as to fit into our square-shaped Western minds. No one else was so eloquent on the horrors of opium as the great Li Hung Chang, when talking with foreigners; yet Li Hung Chang was one of the largest producers of opium in China. When the Chinese army, under imperial direction, was fiercely bombarding the legations in Peking, the imperial government was officially sending fruit and other delicacies, accompanied by courteous notes, asking if there was not something they could do for the comfort of the hard-pressed foreigners.

This indirection would seem to be the result of a constant effort, on the part of everybody in authority, to shirk the responsibility for difficult situations. Under a system which holds a man mercilessly accountable for carrying through any undertaking for which he is known to be responsible, he naturally tries to avoid assuming any responsibility whatever. An official is punished for failure and rewarded for success in China, as in other countries. And the official on whom is saddled the extremely difficult job

of pleasing, at one time, an empress who believes that a Boxer can render himself invisible to foreign sharpshooters by a little mumbling and dancing, a set of courtiers and palace eunuchs who are constantly undermining one another with the deepest Oriental guile, a populace with little more understanding and knowledge of the world than the children of Israel in the Sinai Peninsula, and a hostile band of keen, modern diplomats with trade interests and "concessions" on their tongues and machine guns and magazine rifles at call in their legation compounds, is not in for an easy time.

It hardly seems, then, as if we should blame the Chinese official too harshly if his whole career appears to be made up of a series of "side-steppings" and "ducks"—of what the American boxer aptly calls "foot work." On the other hand, it is not difficult to sympathize with the foreign diplomat who has, year after year, to play this baffling game. He is always making progress and never getting anywhere. He has his choice of going mad or settling down into a confirmed and weary cynicism. In most cases he chooses the latter, and ultimately drifts into a frame of mind in which he doubts anything and every-

thing. He takes it for granted that the Chinese government is always insincere. It is incredible to him that a Chinese official could mean what he says. And so, when the Chinese government declared against the opium evil, the cynical foreign diplomats and traders at once began looking between and behind the lines in the effort to find out what the crafty yellow men were really getting at. That they might mean what they said seemed wholly out of the question. But what deep motive might underlie the proposal was a puzzle. At first the gossips of Peking and the ports ran to the effect that the real scheme was to arouse the anti-opium public opinion in England, and force the British Indian government to give up its opium business. Very good, so far. But why? In order that China, by successfully shutting out the Indian opium, might set up a government monopoly of its own, for revenue, of the home-grown drug? This was the first notion at Peking and the ports. I heard it voiced frequently everywhere. But it proved a hard theory to maintain.

In the first place, the Chinese government could set up a pretty effective government opium business, if it wanted to, without bothering about the

Indian-grown drug. Opium is produced everywhere in China. The demand has grown to a point where the Indian article alone could not begin to supply it. But, on the other hand, the stopping of the importation is necessarily the first step in combating the evil; for, if the Chinese should begin by successfully decreasing their own production of opium, the importation would automatically increase, and consumption remain the same.

In the second place, if it is wholly a "revenue" matter to the Chinese government, why give up the large annual revenue from customs duties on the imported opium? In asking the British to stop their opium traffic the Chinese are proposing deliberately to sacrifice \$5,000,000 annually in customs and *liking* duties on the imported drug, or between a fifth and a sixth of the entire revenue of the imperial customs.

One very convincing indication of the sincerity of the Chinese government in this matter, which I will take up in detail a little later, is the way in which the opium prohibition is being enforced by the Chinese authorities. But before going into that, I should like to call attention to two other evidences of Chinese sincerity in its war

on opium. The first is the patent fact that public opinion all over China, among rich and poor, mandarins and peasants, has turned strongly against the use of opium. I have had this information from too many sources to doubt it. Travellers from the remotest provinces are reporting to this effect. The anti-opium sentiment is found in the highest official circles, in the army, in the navy, in the schools. Within the past year or so it has been growing steadily stronger. Opium-smoking used to be taken as a matter of course; now, where you find a man smoking too much, you also find a group of friends apologizing for him. I have already explained that opium-smoking is not tolerated in the "new" army. There is now a rapidly growing number of officials and merchants who refuse to employ opium-smokers in any capacity.

Now, why is the public opinion of China setting so strongly against opium? Even apart from moral considerations, bringing the matter down to a "practical" basis, why is this so? I will venture to offer an answer to the question. Said one Tientsin foreign merchant, an American who has had unusual opportunities to observe conditions in Northern China: "If the Chinese

do succeed in shutting down on opium, it may mean the end of the foreigners in China. Opium is the one thing that is holding the Chinese back to-day."

Ten or twelve of the legations at Peking now have "legation guards" of from one hundred to three hundred men each. In all, there are eighteen hundred foreign soldiers in Peking, "a force large enough," said one officer, "to be an insult to China, but not large enough to defend us should they really resent the insult."

Twelve hundred miles up the Yangtse River, above the rapids, there is a fleet of tiny foreign gunboats, English and French, which were carried up in sections and put together "to stay." At every treaty port there are one or more foreign settlements, maintained under foreign laws. The Imperial Maritime Customs Service of China is directed and administered throughout by foreigners; this, to insure the proper collection of the "indemnity" money. Foreign "syndicates" have been gobbling up the wonderful coal and iron deposits of China wherever they could find them. And so on. I could give many more illustrations of the foreign grip on China, but these will serve. And back of



these facts looms the always impending "partition of China." The Chinese are not fools. They have sat tight, wearing that inscrutable smile, while the foreigners discussed the cutting up of China as if it were a huge cake. They have seen the Japanese, a race of little brown men, inhabiting a few little islands, face the dreaded bear of Russia and drive it back into Siberia. Now, at last, these patient Chinamen are picking up some odds and ends of Western science. They are building railroads, and manufacturing the rails for them. They are talking about saving China "for the Chinese." In 1906 they mobilized an army of 30,000 "modern" troops for manœuvres in Honan Province. If they are to succeed with this notion, they must begin at the beginning. Opium is dragging them down hill. Opium will not build railroads. Opium will not win battles. Opium will not administer the affairs of the hugest nation on earth. Therefore, no matter what it costs in revenue, no matter how staggering the necessary reform and reorganization, opium must go.

China may be a puzzling land. The Chinese officials may be capable of the most baffling duplicity. But we are forced to believe that

they are "sincere" in putting down the opium traffic. It appears, for China, to be a case of sink or swim.

The next question would seem to be, if the Chinese are really trying to put down the opium traffic, how are they succeeding? We will pass over that part of the problem which relates to Great Britain and the Indian opium trade, with the idea of taking it up in a later chapter. Let us consider now what China, flabby, backward, long-suffering China, is actually doing in this tremendous effort to cure her disorder in order that she may take a new place among the nations. We will deal here with the enforcement of the edict in Shansi Province, taking up in later chapters the results of the prohibition movement in the other provinces.

The plan outlined in the edicts prohibiting opium is clear, direct, forcible. It was evidently meant to be effective. It provides (first) that the governors of the provinces shall ascertain, through the local authorities, the exact number of acres under poppy cultivation. The area of the land used for this purpose shall then be cut down by one-ninth part each year, "so that at the end of nine years there will be no more land

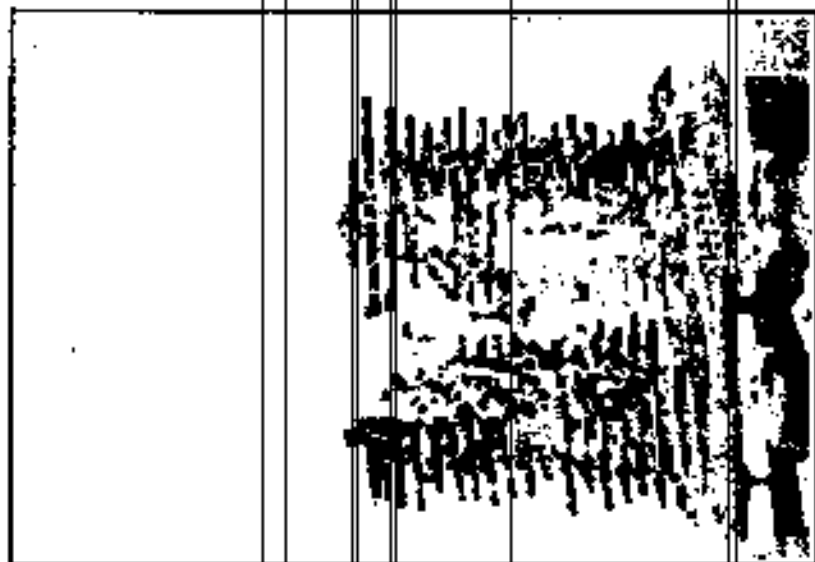
used for such purposes, and the land thus disused"—I am quoting here from the Chinaman who translated the regulations for me—"shall never be used for the said purposes again. Should the owners of such lands disobey the decree, their lands shall be confiscated. Local officials who make special efforts and be able to stop the cultivation of poppy before the said time, they shall be rewarded with promotions."

The plan provides (second) that "all smokers, irrespective of class or sex, must go to the nearest authorities to get certificates, in which they are to write their names, addresses, profession, ages, and the amount of opium smoked each day." Latitude is allowed smokers over sixty years of age, but those under sixty "must get cured before arriving at sixty years of age. Persons who smoke or buy opium without certificates will be punished. No new smokers will be allowed from the date of prohibition. The amount of opium supplied to each smoker must decrease by one-third each year, so that within a few years there will be no opium smoked at all." Officials who overstep the law are to be deprived of their rank. In the case of common people, "their names will be posted up thoroughfares, and will

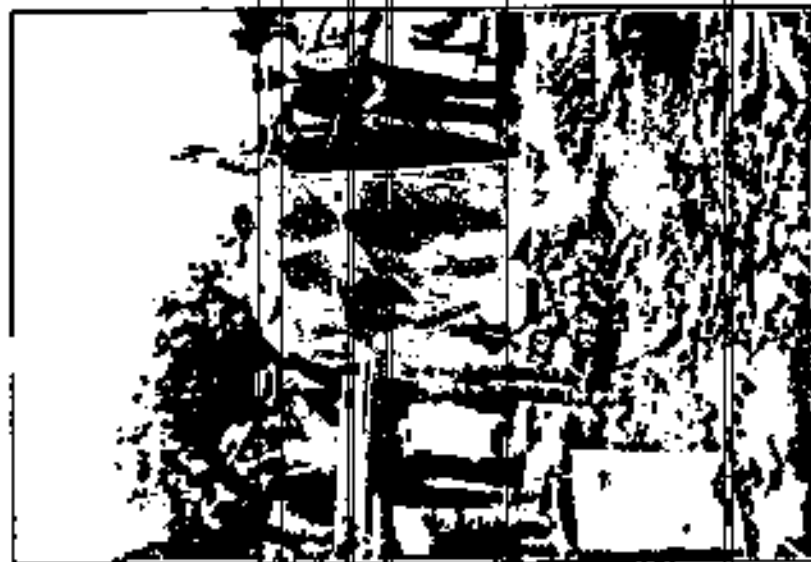
be deprived of privileges in all public gatherings."

Opium dens, as also all restaurants, hotels, and wine-shops which provide couches and lamps for smokers were to be closed at once. If any regular opium den was found open after the prohibition (May, 1907), the property would be confiscated. No new stores for the sale of opium could be opened. "Good opium remedies must be prepared. Multiply the number of anti-opium clubs. If any citizens who can, through their efforts, get many people cured, they will be rewarded. . . . All officials, and the officers of the army and navy, and professors of schools, colleges, and universities, must all get cured within six months." And further, it was decided to "open negotiations with Great Britain, arranging with that power to have less and less opium imported into China each year, till at the end of nine years no opium will be imported at all." The Chinese, it is evident, are not wanting in hopeful sentiment. Reading this, it is almost possible to forget that India needs the money.

"There is another drug, called morphia, which has done (thus my Chinaman's translation) or is doing more harm than opium. The custom



Burning Opium Pipes of Ivory and  
Costly Woods



ENFORCING THE EDICT AT SHANGHAI

Breaking the Opium Lamps



authorities are to be instructed to prohibit strictly the importation of it, except for medical uses."

A clean-cut programme, this; apparently meant to be effective. It was with no small curiosity that I looked about in Shansi Province to see whether there seemed any likelihood of enforcement. The time was ripe. It was April; in May the six months would be up. Opium had ruled in Shansi: could they hope to depose it before the final havoc should be wrought?

The nub of the situation was, of course, the limiting of the crop. Theoretically, it should be easier to prohibit opium than to prohibit alcoholic drinks. Wines and liquors are made from grains and fruits which must be grown anyway, for purposes of food. It would not do to attempt to prohibit liquor by stopping the cultivation of grains and fruits. The poppy, on the other hand, produces nothing but opium and its alkaloids. In stopping the growth of the poppy you are depriving man of no useful or necessary article. The poppy must be grown in the open, along the river-bottoms (where the roads run). It cannot be hidden. As government regulating goes, nothing is easier than to find a field of

poppies and measure it. The plans of the Shansi farmers for the coming year should throw some light on the sincerity of the opium reforms. Were they really arranging to plant less opium? Yes, they were. Reports came to me from every side, and all to the same effect. West and northwest of Tai Yuan-fu many of the farmers had announced that they were planting no poppies at all. This, remember, was in April: planting time was near; it was a practical proposition to those Shansi peasants. In other regions men were planting either none at all, or "less than last year." The reason generally given was that the closing of the dens in the cities had lessened the demand for opium.

The officials were planning not only to make poppy-growing unprofitable to the farmers, they were planning also to advise and assist them in the substitution of some other crop for the poppy. But here they encountered one of the peculiar difficulties in the way of opium reform, the transportation problem. All transportation, off the railroads, is slow and costly. No other product is so easy to transport as opium. A man can carry several hundred dollars' worth on his person; a man with a mule can carry several



thousand dollars' worth. That is one of the reasons why opium is a more profitable crop than potatoes or wheat. But the law descends without waiting for solutions of all the problems involved. The closing of the opium dens all over Shansi had the immediate effect of limiting the crop. It also had the effect of driving out of business a great many firms engaged in the manufacture of pipes and lamps. Sixty-two manufacturing houses in one city, Taiku, either went out of business altogether during the spring months, or turned to new enterprises. I add an interesting bit of evidence as to the effectiveness of the enforcement. It is from a missionary.

"I was calling on one of the foreigners in Tai Yuan-fu and found a beggar lying on one of the door-steps, with his pipe and lamp all going. I told him to clear out. I asked him why he was there, and he told me he had nowhere else to go, now that the smoking-dens were all closed, and that he had to find some sheltered nook where he could have his smoke."

It was not the plan to close the opium sale shops; theoretically, it will take nine or ten years to do that. But after closing all the places where opium was smoked socially and publicly, it should

become possible to register all the individuals who buy the drug for home consumption. It was the closing of the dens, the places for public smoking, in all the cities of Shansi, which had the immediate effect of limiting the crop and the manufacture of smoking instruments. The one hundred and twenty-nine dens of T'ai Yuan-fu were all closed before I arrived there. In T'ai Yuan-fu, as in Peking, you could buy an opium-smoker's outfit for next to nothing. Cloisonné pipes, mounted with ivory and jade, were offered at absurd prices.

One of the saddest features of the situation in Shansi is the activity of the opium-cure fraud. The opium-smoking habit can be cured, once the social element is eliminated, as easily as the morphine or cocaine habits—more easily, some would claim. I do not mean to say that a degraded, degenerate being can be made over, in a week, into a normal, healthy being; but it does not seem to be very difficult to tide even the confirmed smoker over the discomfort and danger that attend breaking off the habit. In Shansi, as in all the opium provinces, "opium refuges" are maintained by the various missions. The usual plan is to charge a small fee for the medi-

cines administered, in order to make the refuges self-supporting. It takes a week or ten days to effect a cure by the methods usually followed. The patient is confined to a room, less and less opium is allowed from day to day, stimulants (either strychnine or atropine) are administered, and local symptoms are treated as may seem necessary to the physician in charge. Some of the missions at first took a stand against the reduction method, believing that medical missionaries should not administer opium in any form; but after a death or two they accepted the inevitable compromise, recognizing that it is not safe to shut down the supply too abruptly. But the number of these refuges is pitifully small beside the extent of the evil. They have been at work for a generation without bringing about any perceptible change in the situation. There are now fewer refuges than formerly in Shansi Province, for none of the missions is fully recruited as yet, after the terrible set-back of 1900.

The opium-cure faker in China, as in the United States and Europe, usually sells morphia under another name. Dr. Edwards, the author of "Fire and Sword in Shansi," last year spent five weeks in travelling northwest of T'ai Yuan-fu,

and reported finding a great many men employed in selling so-called anti-opium medicines. The demand for cures existed everywhere. Now that the popular sentiment is setting in so strongly against the opium habit, the Chinese are peculiarly easy prey for these rascals. They have no conception of medicine as it is practiced in Western countries, and eagerly take whatever is offered to them in the guise of a "cure." The following, told to me by an Englishman who lives in the province, illustrates this :

"There is a lot of mischief being done in Shansi just now by men who have bought drugs in Tientsin, are selling them at random, and making a good thing for themselves. I was travelling one day and was taken violently ill, and I happened to reach a place where I knew a man who had some drugs, so I sent for him and asked him to bring me some medicine. He came along with three bottles, none of which was labelled. He could not tell me what any one of them contained. He said they were all good for stomach-ache, and proposed to mix the three up and give me a good, strong dose. It is needless to say I refused. That man is running a proper establishment and making a lot of money on the drugs he

sells, and that is all he knows about the business."

The upshot of my investigations and inquiries in Shansi was that the anti-opium edicts were being enforced to the letter. This conclusion reached, I naturally looked about to find the man behind the enforcement. Judging from the work done, he should prove worth seeing. Further inquiries drew out the information that he was one of the three rulers of the province, with the title of provincial judge, and that his name was Ting Pao Chuen.

Calling upon a prominent Chinese official is, to a plain, democratic person, rather an impressive undertaking. The Rev. Mr. Sowerby had kindly volunteered to act as interpreter, and him I impressed for instructor and guide through the mazes of official etiquette. It was arranged that I should call at Mr. Sowerby's compound at a quarter to four. From there we would each ride in a Peking cart with a driver and one extra servant in front. There was nothing, apparently, for the extra servant to do; but it was vitally important that he should sit on the front platform of the cart.

A Peking cart is a red-and-blue dog house,

balanced, without springs, on an axle between two heavy wheels. The sides, back, and rounding roof are covered with blue cloth. A curtain hangs in front. In the middle of each side is a tiny window, and it is at such windows that you occasionally get the only glimpses you are ever likely to get of Chinese ladies. There is no seat in a Peking cart; you sit on the padded floor. When you get in, the servant holds up the front curtain, you vault to the front platform, and, placing your hands on the floor, propel yourself backward, with as much dignity as possible, taking care not to knock your hat against the roof, until you have disappeared inside. If you are long of leg, your feet will stick out in front of the curtain, leaving scant room for the two servants, who sit, one on each side, with their feet hanging down in front of the wheels. The two carts, two drivers, and two extra servants, set out from the Baptist Mission compound, to convey Mr. Sowerby and me to the Yâmen, or official residence, of His Excellency.

Every Yâmen has three great gates barring the way to the inner compound. If the resident official wishes to humiliate you, he has his man stop your cart at the first gate and compels you

to enter on foot. Fortunately for us, since it was raining hard, His Excellency had chosen to treat us with marked courtesy. The carts halted at the second gate while Mr. Sowerby's servant ran in with our red Chinese cards. There was a brief wait, and then we drove on through a long courtyard to the inner or screen gate, where massive timbered doors were closed against us. Soon these swung open; the carts crossed a paved yard and pulled up under the projecting roof of the Yâmen porch; and we scrambled down from the carts, while two tall mandarins, in official caps and buttons, dressed in flowing robes of silk and embroidery, came rapidly forward to meet us. One of these, the younger and shorter, I recognized as Mr. Wen, the interpreter for the Shansi foreign bureau.

The other mandarin was a man of ability and charm. Some of us, perhaps, have formed our notion of the Chinaman from the Cantonese laundryman type which we may have seen at his bench or on the Third Avenue elevated railway in New York. This would be about as accurate as to call the coster at his barrow the typical Englishman; just about as accurate as to call the Bowery loafer the typical American. His Excellency ap-

peared to be close to six feet in height; he was erect and lithe of figure, with marked physical grace. He greeted Mr. Sowerby by clasping his hands before his breast and bowing, then turned, and with a genial smile extended his right hand to grip mine. He used no English, but the Chinese language, as he spoke it, was both dignified and musical, and not at all like the sing-song jabbering I had heard on the streets and about the hotels.

Ting led the way into a reception-room which was furnished in red cloth and dark woods. There was a seat and a table against each side, and two red cushions on the edge of a platform across the end of the room, with a low table between them. An attendant appeared with tea. Ting took a covered tea bowl in his two hands, extended it towards me, bowed, then placed it on the low stand—thus indicating the seat which I was to take, on the platform. Mr. Wen said, in my ear, "Sit down." Mr. Sowerby was placed at the other side of the stand; the two Chinese gentlemen seated themselves at the two side-tables, facing each other. One thing I remembered from Mr. Sowerby's coaching—I must not touch my bowl of tea. I must not even look at



it. The tea is not to drink; it is brought in order that the caller may be enabled to take his leave gracefully. The Chinese gentlefolk are so wedded to life's little ceremonies that guest and host cannot bring themselves to talk right out about terminating a visit. The guest would shiver at the notion of saying, "Well, I must go, now." Instead, he fingers his tea bowl, or perhaps merely glances at it; and then he and his host both rise.

His Excellency fixed his eyes on me and uttered a deliberate, musical sentence. "He says," translated Mr. Sowerby, "that you have come to help China." I am afraid I blushed at this. It had not occurred to me to state my mission in just those words. I replied that I had come, as a journalist, to learn the truth about the opium question. We talked for an hour about the wonderful warfare which China is waging against her besetting vice. "China is sincere in this struggle," he said. "Public opinion was never more determined." He asked me if I had investigated the new Malay drug which had lately been heralded as a specific for opium-poisoning. "If," he said, "you should learn of any real cure, while you are investigating this subject, I wish you

would advise me about it." I promised him I would do so. I had already heard from a number of sources that Ting was personally giving two to three thousand taels a month (a tael is about seventy-five cents) to the support of opium refuges and for the purchase of drugs for distribution among the poor. "China is sick," he said; "she must be cured so that she may hold up her head among the nations."

Shortly after we had driven back through the rain and had mounted the stairs to Mr. Sowerby's library, a Yâmen runner was shown into the room, bearing presents from the provincial judge. The runner bowed to me and presented his tray. On it, beside the large red "card" of Ting Pao Chuen, were four bottles of native wine, or "shumshoo," two cans of beef tongue, and two cans of sauerkraut!

## SOWING THE WIND IN CHINA—SHANGHAI

**I**N her development China is dependent on the adoption of Western ideas and is influenced by the example set by Western civilization. This modernizing influence is strongest at the point where the Westerner meets the Chinaman, where the two civilizations come into direct contact. At Shanghai, Tientsin, Hankow, Hongkong, and the other ports there are some thirty to forty thousand Europeans, Englishmen, and Americans. They build splendid buildings and lay good pavements. They bring with them the best liquors. The life they live gives about as accurate an impression of Western civilization—of what the Western nations stand for—as the great majority of the Chinese (a most observing race) are ever likely to receive. We have examined into China's sincerity, now let us examine into the honesty of purpose of the foreign "concessions" and "settlements" which fringe the China Coast. If these communities are representing our civilization out there,

it seems fair to ask whether they are representing it well ; for if they are misrepresenting us, if they are contributing to the sort of international misunderstanding which breeds trouble, we may as well know it.

When, in the course of her gropings and strugglings towards civilization, China turns for enlightenment to the great, successful nations of Europe and America, what does she see? Well, for one thing, she sees Shanghai.

Shanghai has been called the Paris of the extreme East. It is the paradise of the adventurer and the adventuress, of the gambler, the beach-comber, and the long-chance promoter. Midway of the China Coast, at the mouth of the mighty Yangtse River, it is the principal port of entrance into China. From England, Germany, France, Australia, Japan, the United States, and Canada comes an endless column of steamships to Shanghai. To Hongkong, Saigon, Bangkok, Singapore, Chefoo, Tientsin, and the uppermost ports of the Yangtse, 1,250 miles inland, go endless columns of steamships from Shanghai. And of the travellers on these ships nearly all have, or expect to have, or have had, business or pleasure at Shanghai.

It is the most truly cosmopolitan city in the world; for Paris, after all, is mainly French; London, after all, is mainly English; New York, after all, is mainly American. Shanghai has its French hotels, its imposing German Club, its English Country Club, its race-track, its Russian Bank, its Japanese mercantile houses, its American post-office. It is ruled by a council of Englishmen, Germans, and Americans. It is policed by English bobbies, Irishmen, Sikhs from India, and Chinamen. On the Bubbling Well Road, of a sunny spring afternoon, where the latest thing in motor cars weaves through the line of smart carriages, you may see Spaniard elbowing Filipino, Portuguese jostling Parsee, Austrian chatting with Bavarian; and they all talk, gamble, drink, and buy in pidgin English.

This settlement of fifteen thousand Europeans, living apart from that public opinion which compels the maintenance of a social standard in every European country, and indifferent to that local public opinion which keeps up a certain curious standard among the Chinese themselves, seems to have practically no standard at all. The problem of every decent American or Englishman who finds himself established in business is

whether he dare bring his wife and family and introduce them into circles so degraded that families disintegrate and children grow up under disheartening influences. The heavy drinking of the China Coast ports is proverbial, yet the drinking seems little more than an incident in a city where the social atmosphere is tainted and altogether unwholesome.

I stood one night in the barroom of one of the big hotels. It was one o'clock in the morning, and nearly every one of the dozen white men in the room was more or less drunk. They were roaring out maudlin songs, and shouting incoherent cries. Two men, well-dressed gentlemen, were on the floor. And behind the bar, yawning, waiting for an opportunity to close up and go to sleep, stood two Chinese men and one boy. They were neat, respectful, and perfectly sober. Their almond eyes flitted about the room, taking in every detail of that beastly scene. It would be impossible to say what they were thinking, but I observed that they did not smile as a Chinaman usually does. Perhaps, to the reader who does not know the China Coast, it seems unfair to cite this case as an example of the active influence of our civilization in China. I will not

do so. I will merely ask if you could ever hope to make those three young Chinamen believe that our civilization is superior to theirs.

Where such a low moral tone prevails, in a self-governing community, it is bound to limit the perception and the power of the government of that community. Let any observing visitor acquaint himself with Shanghai and its social and moral standards (which will not be difficult, for these will be thrust upon him soon after his arrival) and he will soon see for himself that the residents of Shanghai, while they freely and hotly criticize their council, never accuse it of priggishness or of moral restraint. This is enough to show that the council makes no effort to oppose the prevailing sentiment. The gambling business attains, in Shanghai, to the altitude of a considerable industry. During the race weeks, spring and fall, the vacant lots near the race-track are rented at high rates by those gamblers of all nations who have no regular quarters, and the games go on merrily in the open air, within full view of the crowds in the road. Now seven of the nine members of the council are Englishmen. English ideas are supposed to prevail in the settlement, feebly seconded by German and Ameri-

can. And the laws under which Shanghai is theoretically governed forbid gambling.

All the lower forms of organized vice combine to form a large and highly profitable branch of Shanghai's commerce. Partly because of the willingness of the locally stronger nations to shoulder off the responsibility for a disgraceful state of things, and partly because of the number of adventurous and unprincipled Americans who have drained off to the China Coast, America has had to endure more than her share of the blame for this condition. For years every degraded woman who could speak the language has called herself an "American girl"; until the term, which at home arouses a natural pride, has grown so unpleasant that decent Americans have chafed under the insult. To-day it is best not to use the phrase "American girl" on the China Coast.

Of the other and less vicious sorts of adventurers who turn up like bad pennies at Shanghai, the beach-comber is easily the most picturesque. Many writers, notably Robert Louis Stevenson, have employed him as a character in fiction. The majority of the beach-combers probably are or have been seafaring men. Next in numerical order, probably, come the discharged soldiers and



the deserters. It takes either a certain amount of money or a certain amount of ability for any unattached American or European to get out to the China Coast, and an equal amount for him to get back. Therefore the stranded soldiers and sailors, brought out there at the cost of nation or ship owner, beating their way from port to port, drinking, gambling, starving, ready for any dubious enterprise that promises quick returns on a small investment, are a sorry lot. The sharps, swindlers, and shadowy promoters, on the other hand, are men necessarily possessed either of money or wit sufficient to get them out to China, and not unnaturally they represent the higher grades of their various crafts. From Peking to Hongkong, the coast is infested with these gentlemanly rascals, each with impressive garments and a convincing story. Josiah Flynt once wrote a tale of some enthusiastic young promoters who undertook, at a considerable outlay in capital and in personal risk, to sell a steam calliope to the Grand Lama of Thibet. After a brief acquaintance with the diverse and ingenious schemes that sprout, flower, and go to seed on the China Coast, this tale seems not nearly so improbable as it perhaps sounds to the casual reader.

Other, and more recent, types of adventurers are the stranded free-lance journalist and camp-followers who were lured Eastward by the prospect of pickings along the trails of the Japanese and Russian armies during the late war, and who later found themselves unable to get back home. In 1906, Consul-General Rodgers, of Shanghai, reported as follows on the subject of unscrupulous Americans who have been imposing on the Chinese to the detriment of American trade:

“There are many things which can be given as current reasons for retarding American trade in the Orient. The advent of a class of Americans, like those who came from Manila after a brief experience there, and those who tried their fortunes in connection with the events of the Russo-Japanese War, has done a great deal to injure the American name and reputation with the Chinese. This class, usually indigent, has, by reason of imposition upon the Chinese, destroyed to some extent a confidence which has existed for many years and which had borne good fruit. There are good reasons for saying that every American firm which contemplates sending a representative to China should be very certain of his character, and, other things being equal, should choose the

quiet, orderly person rather than the reverse type, in spite of the current opinion that such are indicated for the Orient."

If Shanghai is the sort of a place that it would here appear to be, if it sets a vicious example in its government, in its business practice, and in the character of many of its inhabitants, the fact would seem to indicate that it is most decidedly misrepresenting out there the sort of civilization that we, Europeans as well as Americans, have always supposed that we stood for. It would appear that the Chinese, at the point of contact with our civilization, are getting a false impression of us. It would be easy to dismiss as remote and unimportant the vicious example set by a group of adventurers and promoters on the China Coast; but unfortunately this little group is the most important single contributing factor in the exceedingly delicate matter of the rapidly developing relations between China and the great Christian nations.

The influence of the Shanghai example on China is real and positive. Geographically, Shanghai commands the trade of the middle coast, the immense Yangtse Valley, and the Grand Canal. Every night a big river steamer

leaves for Hankow and the intermediate river ports. Every day a big river steamer comes in from the same cities. Trading junks and small steamers innumerable ply between the river and coast ports and Shanghai. Chinese merchants come from hundreds of miles around to trade with the foreigners or with the native "compradores" attached to foreign houses. On their return to their various interior cities or villages these traders spread tales of the foreign devils who inhabit the great city near the sea. Foreign merchants, travelling salesmen, engineers, and insurance agents travel up and down the great river, up and down the coast; they penetrate, by steamer, railroad, mule-litter, or cart, into the interior cities of the great provinces, leaving everywhere on plastic minds distinct and ineffaceable impressions of their manners, business methods, and morals.

In the foreign settlement of Shanghai, and apart from the population of the native city which adjoins it, there are, roughly, 450,000 Chinese who have chosen to dwell in the territory and under the laws of the white men. This population is not fixed, but fluctuates as the floating element comes and goes; and every-

where that this floating element travels when out of the city it leaves an impression—a story, a bit of gossip, an example of the sharp dealing learned from the foreigner—of the manners, business methods, and morals of Shanghai. The native newspapers comment frankly on life and conditions in the great seaport, and their comments are reprinted in the papers of the interior. Shanghai exerts a direct and result-breeding influence on fifty to seventy-five million native minds, and an indirect influence on all China. How many scores of fair-minded, straightforward merchants, how many thousands of scattered missionaries and teachers will it take, think you, to counteract that influence?

China, grappling with the problem of decay, fighting desperately against an evil which the most nearly Christian of the Christian nations has fastened on her, looks westward for enlightenment, and sees—Shanghai. And Shanghai—well Shanghai plays the races and the roulette wheel, and drinks, and forgets the sacred significance of marriage and the economic importance of the home, and goes to the club, and except in casting up profits gives never a thought to that vast, muttering populace that

waits—waits—for the day of the under-dog to come.

Such was the condition of things when the Chinese war on opium began to assume effective proportions during the spring of 1906. Now, Shanghai—the “settlement,” that is—was in a peculiar, an unfortunate, condition as regarded the anti-opium crusade. I have already given, in an earlier chapter, the estimate of Robert E. Lewis, general secretary of the Y. M. C. A., at Shanghai, that there were, in 1906, nearly 22,000 places in the international settlement, little and big, where opium could be purchased, more than 19,000 of which kept pipes, lamps, and divans on the premises for smokers. All of the dens which were openly conducted were paying a regular license fee to the municipal government, amounting last year to 98,000 Shanghai taels, or about \$70,000 in gold. It is against the law to permit women or children to enter the smoking-dens, and a clause to this effect is printed on the license as a condition in granting it; yet when Captain Borisragon, the chief of police, was asked how many regular women inmates were in the dens, he replied, in writing, that there were at least 3,200 women so kept, and doubtless a great

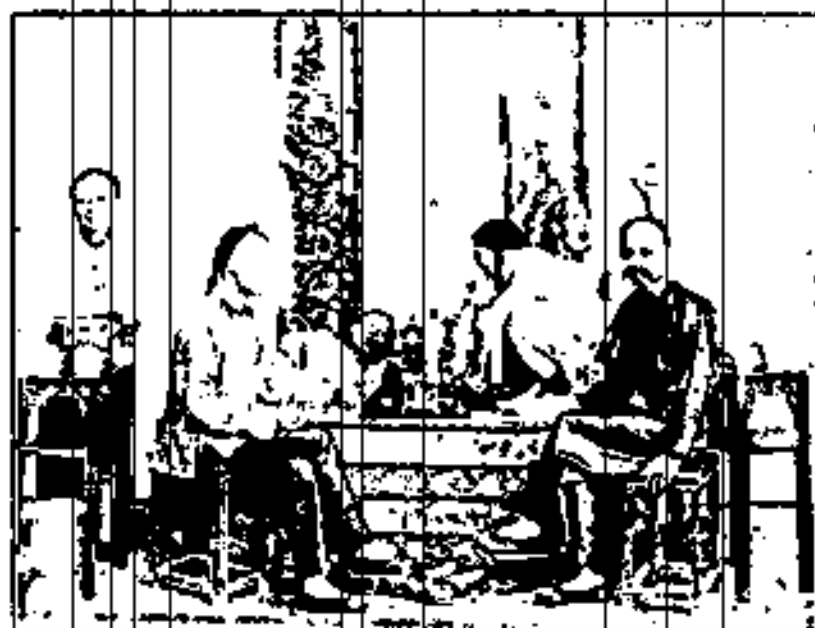
many more who did not appear on his records. When the tax and license department was asked why this clause was not enforced, the reply was made, without the slightest attempt at excuse or explanation, that when a license was issued to the keeper of an "opium brothel" the clause prohibiting women inmates was erased.

These curious facts combine to present an appearance familiar to one who has studied the municipal protection of vice in this country. It is asking too much of human credulity to expect one to believe that this clause was regularly erased for nothing. But apart from what individual graft there may have been in it, that \$70,000 in revenue was an item not to be lightly given up by the hard-headed municipal council. And the amount of money put into circulation by the patrons of these dens was also an attractive item, as Shanghai sees things. The prevailing opinion among the foreigners of "the settlement" was simply and flatly that the settlement could not afford to close the dens. The leading English newspaper hastened to defend the sordid attitude of the council by explaining that, as the licenses were issued for a year, they had no right to close the places, at least before the spring of 1908.

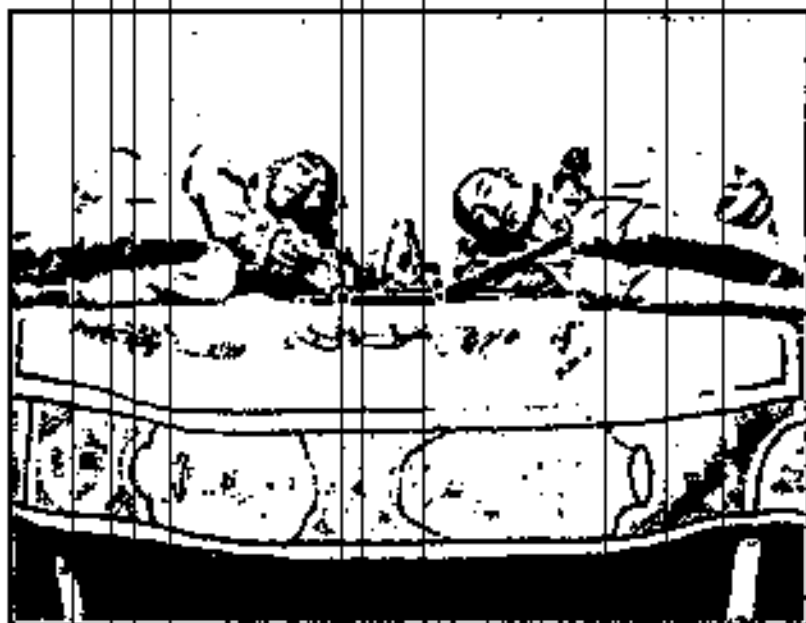
The interesting and significant fact is that while this miserable condition of affairs was allowed to drag along in the international settlement, where the white men rule, the Chinese native city, immediately adjoining, was strictly enforcing the anti-opium edicts. The Chinese authorities went about the enforcement in a thoroughly effective manner. The date set for the closing of the dens was May 22, 1907. There was some fear that the closing down might precipitate a riot, and, accordingly, the authorities took measures to keep the populace in hand. Chinese soldiers were placed on guard at the places where crowds would be most likely to gather, the dens were quietly closed, padlocked, and the shutters put up; and red signs, calling attention to the imperial edict prohibiting opium, were pasted up on doors or shutters. It was quite evident that the proprietors of these dens took the enforcement most seriously. Some of them went immediately into other lines of business; others made their places over into tea-houses.

So at Shanghai the Chinese warfare on the "foreign smoke" was waged earnestly and effectively in the native city. The Chinese





IN AN OPIUM DEN, SHANGHAI



OPIUM SMOKING



authorities closed the dens—permanently, it seems fair to believe. And the only result of their heroic action,—and it is an heroic action to suppress a prosperous and thoroughly established branch of commerce in any city,—the only result was that the opium business went over to the adjoining city of the foreigners, who gladly accepted it, and took the money which had formerly been spent in the native city. The foreigners live wholly outside of and above Chinese law. They have their own strips of land, their own courts, their own local government, all guaranteed to them by the treaties which China has, at one time or another, been forced to sign. When the Chinese first proposed to stamp out opium, these foreigners laughed, and talked about the chronic insincerity of the Chinese government. When the yellow men did stamp out opium in that native city a mile or so away, these foreigners said that it would not be fair to the holders of licenses to close down in the settlement. As I have had occasion to say before, the Chinese are not fools. They grasped the significance of the situation, and spoke out frankly. The local mandarins protested to the settlement council. The native

newspapers called attention to it. And all this clear insight into an extraordinary situation and the frank comment on it were communicated, by the routes and the means which I have described earlier in this chapter, to the fifty or seventy-five million Chinese who are directly influenced by conditions at Shanghai. Now, in the light of these facts, in the light of what they see and know, it is time to ask, and to ask with feeling—How can you hope to make those fifty to seventy-five million Chinamen believe that our civilization, with its science, and its whisky, and its keen grasp on "revenue," and its contradictory and confusing teachings of Christianity, is superior to their civilization? And if they do not believe that our civilization is superior, how long do you suppose they will endure the treatment they receive from us? As time rolls on, there will be more "Boxer" uprisings in China, more crazy and disastrous protests against foreign domination and exploitation. When these troubles come, it will be well to recall that Shanghai,—not the individual inhabitants, but the government of that little "settlement" of foreigners which lies upon the west bank of the Woosung River,—officially and for profit maintained its

traffic in the drug that is China's curse after the Chinese had stopped their own opium traffic. It will be well to recall it, because it is quite certain that the Chinese themselves will not have forgotten it.

I have gone thus at length into the deplorable example which Shanghai, the most important foreign settlement in China, exhibits to the struggling, opium-ridden yellow men, because it is typical of the whole course of the foreigner in China. In the next chapter we shall consider further evidence in looking into the conditions of life and of the opium problem at Hong-kong and Tientsin. It is of course peculiarly unfortunate that Shanghai, when the great opportunity came to extend a helping hand to China in the opium fight, should have failed, utterly, ignominiously. But the slightest acquaintance with the place is enough to make it plain that Shanghai, as it has been and still is, is not likely to extend a helping hand to anybody. The helping hand is not exactly what Shanghai stands for. It really stands for the domination of the great Yangtse Valley, for the exploitation of China, and, incidentally, for a sort of snug harbour for criminals and degenerates. There

can be no doubt that the fifty to seventy-five millions of Chinese who come directly within the radiating influence of Shanghai know this perfectly well. It is also quite likely that these and the few hundred other millions who make up "the Middle Kingdom" know perfectly well, that the complicated commercial establishments of all the various foreign nations in China stand for similar principles. And they doubtless know further that the very important and very cynical gentlemen who represent the great and prosperous foreign powers at Peking, are there for no other purpose than diplomatically to put on the pressure whenever China chances to block a move or gain a piece in this sordid and unholy game of chess. So perhaps we had better give up, once and for all, any serious consideration of the charges made by certain foreign powers that China is insincere in her warfare on opium. Such charges and insinuations, coming from such sources, hardly command respect.

It is plain that this greedy exploitation, going so far as even to snatch a profit out of the opium struggle, is not a healthy basis of intercourse between great nations. If the Chinese were a Congo tribe, or a race of American Indians, this policy

might pay commercially; for in that case it would be a matter for the Christian nations of simply killing off the Chinese or driving them off the land, and then of fighting among themselves over the division of the spoils. But this policy, which succeeds against weak and numerically small nations, will hardly succeed in China. Driving four hundred million Chinese off the land would be a large order, a very different thing, indeed, from wiping out a tribe of "Fuzzy Wuzzys" with machine guns. All of the military observers with whom I have talked in China show a tendency to grow thoughtful over the subject of China's potential military strength. From the days of the T'ai Ping Rebellion and "Chinese" Gordon's "ever victorious" army, down to the review of 30,000 of Yuan Shi K'ai's troops, with modern weapons and modern drill, in Honan Province in the summer of 1906, it has been plain that the Chinese make splendid soldiers when properly led. And yet it seems to have occurred to few white statesmen that the deepest interests of trade itself, sordid trade, demand that China be treated fairly and that the relations between China and the powers be established on a basis that makes for mutual respect and for

peace, rather than on a basis that makes for exploitation, outrage, massacre, warfare, "indemnity," and smouldering hate. John Hay saw over the balance-sheet, when he established the "open door" policy. Elihu Root has seen over the balance-sheet in arranging to waive the future claims of this country for indemnity money. And Lord Elgin, for England, saw over the balance-sheet when he outlined that sound policy which he was afterwards one of the first to violate—"Never to make an unjust demand of China, and never to recede from a demand once made." To-day it seems apparent that the great nations cannot be brought together to agree on any really enlightened policy in China. Even had such a thing been possible a few years ago, the untrustworthy methods of Russia and the growing ambitions of Japan would make it impossible to-day. Nations which, when brought together in a "Peace Conference," cannot even agree upon the rules of war, will hardly forego the chance of seizing some special advantage in the colossal grab-bag which is China. And so it seems likely that the genial commercial adventurers and gamblers and vice promoters of Shanghai will go on sowing



the wind in China—and that the sullen hate of those silent, observing millions of yellow men will deepen and smoulder until the final day of reckoning, the day of reaping, shall come.

There is one ray of light which, to-day, illuminates the China Coast. It is a small ray, when we consider the number of dark corners to be illuminated, and yet there is the bare possibility that it may prove the beginning of better conditions. Somewhat less than two years ago the United States government established a wholly new institution, the United States Court for China. L. R. Willey, one of the legal officers whom Judge Taft had trained in Manila during his governorship of the Philippines, was appointed the first judge of this court, and was sent out, with a district attorney, a marshal, and a clerk, to administer justice to Americans up and down the China Coast and along the Yangtse River. By treaty, all American citizens are exempt from judgment under the Chinese law, that peculiar jumble of tradition, superstition, common sense, and Oriental severity. Formerly, justice had been dealt out in courts presided over by the consul-generals and the consuls in their respective districts.

Now it should be obvious to the most casual observer that the peculiar conditions and the peculiar industries which thrive in the treaty ports give rise to a considerable number of legal entanglements. There is, of course, a large volume of legitimate business transacted on the Coast, which gives legitimate employment to a few lawyers; but there is a volume of illegitimate and semi-legitimate business which would also naturally give employment to other lawyers. At the time of Judge Wilfley's appointment one thing was clear to the enlightened heads of our Department of State at Washington; the consular courts, thanks to the skill and resource of the American lawyer on the Coast, were in a constant tangle of perplexed inefficiency, and the American name was sinking steadily lower in China.

It is likely that no American judge ever faced so peculiar and difficult a task as that assigned to Judge Wilfley. It was his duty to take the place of a lacking public opinion, and to raise the drooping prestige of his country. He had behind him no settled code of laws, but merely a few treaties and a few orders from the Department of State. He had not only to judge cases

between Americans, but also cases between Americans and citizens of other nationalities, including the Chinese themselves. He had to establish rulings on the most complicated matters of coastwise commerce, in a land where coastwise commerce is involved with perplexing local customs and superstitions. Above all, he had, from the start, to fight a well-organized, well-entrenched band of shady characters who had run their course for so long without anything in the nature of a public opinion to hold them in check that they resented his advent as an encroachment on their vested right to do as they chose. The last and most perplexing of his problems was that in rooting out these evils he was in danger at every turn of arraying against him the citizens of other nationalities and even of arousing the active enmity of the courts and the officials of other nations, most of whom had been content to let Shanghai jog along in its easy-going, sordid way.

It is to Judge Wilfley's everlasting credit that, with a full knowledge of the difficulties and dangers before him, he went straight to the heart of the problem. Seeing that certain American lawyers had long stood between the old consular

courts and anything which could be called justice, he set to work first to solve the problem of the lawyers. His campaign for a higher standard on the Coast has not been without its humorous moments. Mr. Bassett, his shrewd young district attorney, preceded him to Shanghai to "look the ground over." The little group of American lawyers at Shanghai made haste to get acquainted with him. One of the ablest among them invited him, casually and informally, to dinner. When Bassett arrived at the dinner he found himself, to his astonishment, confronted with thirty or forty "leading citizens," including all the American lawyers and several men of questionable business character whom he rather expected to be prosecuting a little later on.

After the coffee and cigars, the host rose, and in a neat little speech called on Bassett to tell the company something about Judge Wilfley and what work he meant to do in Shanghai. It was a difficult situation. A slow-witted man might have found himself in a fix. But Bassett, if I may credit the account which reached me, was equal to the situation. He rose, and looked around the table from face to face.

"Gentlemen," he said, "as I have come un-

prepared for this pleasure, I shall have to fall back on story-telling. In the small hours, one morning, two men who had been having rather too good a time were navigating from street corner to street corner. Said Smith, 'Jonesh, shtime to go home. Shgetting broad daylight. Theresh sun shining up there.'

"'No, Shmith,' replied Jones, 'you're mistaken. Tha'sh moon up there, and it's night.' They staggered down the street, Smith insisting that it was day, Jones insisting that it was night, until they met a fellow inebriate clinging to a fire plug. To him they appealed their dispute. He heard them out, and then looked thoughtfully up at the moon. For a long time he puzzled over the problem, and finally, giving it up, turned to them and said politely, 'Gentlemen, you'll have to 'scuse me. I'm a stranger in town.'

"And, gentlemen," said Hassett, again looking about from face to face, "you'll have to excuse me. I'm a stranger in town."

Judge Wilfley began by calling upon every American lawyer who was practicing in Shanghai to bring a certificate of good moral character and to pass an examination before he could be admitted to practice in the new court. The ex-

amination was given, and only two of the lawyers passed. At once there was a hubbub. The judge was attacked hotly. One of the lawyers who failed to pass hurried over to this country, making a speech at Honolulu, on the way, in which he insinuated charges of corruption against Judge Wilfley. Shortly after his arrival at San Francisco, he prevailed upon the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, on the Pacific Coast, to reverse one of Judge Wilfley's decisions without having the facts of the whole case in hand and without a hearing from the China court. He went on to Washington, and within a month or two last winter actually got a bill through the United States Senate reinstating all the disqualified lawyers. The bill is before the House at this present session. He has conducted a newspaper campaign against Judge Wilfley in this country since his return last year. It seems only fair to call attention to these facts on a fearless and able man, because Judge Wilfley is too hard at work in a distant country to be able to defend himself. In the course of my travels from port to port last year, it became clear to me that this new court was the one uplifting factor in a distressing general condition.

Judge Wilfey, like his district attorney, seems to hold no visionary theories, in spite of the high standard he has set. Before leaving China, I made it a point to call on him and talk with him about the work he is doing in the interest of the American name. He seemed to recognize clearly enough that vice and depravity can no more be put down out of hand in Shanghai than they can be put down out of hand in New York or Chicago or Boston. But he maintained that the disreputably open flaunting of vice can be stopped. In fining the "American girls" \$500 (gold) each, and driving a number of them off the Coast, his attack has been directed mainly against the dishonourable use of an honourable phrase. In imprisoning or driving away the American gamblers, he has been trying to put gambling down more nearly to the place it occupies, in this country, as a minor rather than as a major branch of industry. Judge Wilfey has undertaken an Herculean task. It seems to be the hope of all that patient minority, the better class of Americans on the China Coast, that he will be permitted to continue his fight unhampered by political machinery "back home."

There are two other points, besides Shanghai,

at which the two kinds of civilization, Western and Eastern, come into contact—Hongkong and Tientsin. Each is different from the other as well as from Shanghai; and each plays a curious part in the opium drama. We shall take them up in the next chapter.



## VI

### SOWING THE WIND IN CHINA—TIENTSIN AND HONGKONG

**I**F you could avoid the suburbs of mud huts and walled compounds, and step directly down from an airship on the broad piazza of the Astor House at Tientsin (no treaty port is complete without its Astor House), you might also imagine yourself in a thriving English town. Set about this piazza are round tables, in bowers of potted plants, where sit Britishers, Germans, and Americans, with a gay sprinkling of soldiery. Across the street there is a green little park, where plump British babies are wheeled about and children romp among the shrubbery, and where the Sikh band plays on Sundays. There is nothing, unless it be the group of rickshaw coolies at the curb, or the fat Chinese policeman in the roadway, to recall China to the mind.

Yet Tientsin dominates all Northern China much as Shanghai dominates the mighty valley of the Yangtse. The railways and waterways (including the Grand Canal) all lead to Tientsin.

It is Peking's seaport. The viceroy of the Northern Provinces makes it his seat of government. The chief point of contact between these Northern Provinces and Western civilization, it is through Tientsin that the new ideas which are stirring the sluggish Chinese mind to new desires and to a new purpose filter into one hundred million Mongoloid heads.

The foreign settlement is simply a polyglot cluster of nationalities, each with its "concession" or allotment of land wrung from a browbeaten empire, each with its separate municipal government ruled by its own consul-general, and the whole combined, for purposes of defense and aggression, into a loosely knit city of seven or eight thousand whites under the general direction of a dozen consulates. The British have their polo, golf, and racing grounds; the French have their wealthy church orders and their Parisian moving pictures; the Germans have their beer halls and delicatessen shops. The Japanese, the Russians, the Italians, the Austrians, all the powers, in fact, excepting the United States—which holds no land in China—contribute their lesser shares to the colour and the activity of this extraordinary place. And only a mile or two away,

further up the crooked river, lies the huge, sprawling Chinese city, where nine hundred and fifty thousand blue-clad celestials—nearly a round million of them—ceaselessly watch the squabbling groups of foreigners, and by means of newspapers, travelling merchants, and the thousand and one other instruments for the spreading of gossip, tell all Northern China what they see.

Tientsin, then, like Shanghai, is a potent, an electric, force in its influence on China. Whatever the Chinese are to become in their struggle towards the light of day will be in some measure due to the example set by these two cities, the only samples of Western civilization which the Chinaman can scrutinize at close range. The missionary tells him of the God of the Western peoples, and of how His Spirit regenerates humankind; the Chinaman listens stolidly, and then turns to look at the samples of regenerated peoples that fringe his Coast. What he actually sees will stick in his mind long after what he merely hears shall have passed out at the other ear. And these impressions that stick in the Chinaman's mind are precisely the highly charged forces that are revolutionizing China to-day.

While still at Peking, I had picked up more or

less gossip which seemed to indicate that the Tientsin foreign concessions were setting an unfortunate example in the matter of opium. In several of the concessions there are thousands of Chinese traders who have crowded in the white man's territory, in order to make a living. These Chinese districts demand their opium, and they have always been allowed to have it. The opium shops and dens are licensed, as are our saloons, and the resulting revenue is cheerfully accepted by the various municipalities. When the Chinese officials set out to fight opium last winter and spring, they asked the foreign consuls to coöperate with them. This could be no more than a friendly request, for the concessions are foreign soil, that have passed wholly out of China's control; but it was obviously of no use to close the dens of the native city if smokers could continue to gratify their desire by simply walking down the road.

This request bothered the consuls. The Chinese had adroitly placed them in a difficult position. A failure to coöperate would look bad; but revenue is revenue, on the Chinese Coast as elsewhere. More, if they could play for time, the enforcement in the native city, by driving

the smokers over into the concessions, would actually increase the revenue. So the consuls played for time. They spread the impression "back home" that they were going to close the dens. When? Oh, soon—very soon. There were matters of detail to attend to. The licenses must run out. Then, too, perhaps the Chinese proposals were "insincere"—a little time would show.

The British concession boasted proudly that it had no opium dens. This was true. The concession is wholly taken up with British shops and British homes, and there is no room for Chinese residents. The German concession had so few natives that it closed some of its dens and took what credit it could. The Japanese quietly put on the lid. But all the other concessions remained "wide open."

So ran the Peking gossip. It seemed to me worth while to follow it up; for if it should prove true that the concessions were actually profiting, like Shanghai, by the native prohibition, that fact would be significant. It would leave little to say for the representatives of foreign civilization in China.

There was a particular reason why the pro-

hibition should be made effective in and about Tientsin. The one official who stood before his country and the world as the anti-opium leader, who personified, in fact, the reform spirit which is leavening the Chinese mass, was Yuan Shi K'ai, the Northern viceroy. Tientsin was his viceregal capital. Before he could hope to convince the cynical observers of Britain and Europe that the anti-opium crusade was really on, he had to make good in his own city.

Yuan Shi K'ai is a remarkable man. Unlike some of his colleagues who have travelled and studied abroad, he has never, I believe, been over the sea; yet no Chinese official shows a firmer grasp on his biggest and most bewildering of the world's governmental problems. Practically a self-made man (his father was a soldier), he worked up from rank to rank, himself a part and a product of the antiquated absolutism of his country, until he emerged at the top, a red-button mandarin, a viceroy, with a personality towering above the superstitious, tradition-ridden court, and yet sufficiently able and skillful to work with and through that court. We have seen, in an earlier chapter, how Yuan, then a governor, kept Shantung Province quiet during the

Boxer outbreak. It is he who is building up the "new army" with the aid of German and Japanese drill-masters. It is he who succeeded in introducing the study of modern science into the education of the official classes. He is committed to the abolition of the palace eunuch system. He has, during the past year, made great headway with his bold plan to remodel this land of fossilized ideas into a constitutional monarchy, with a representative parliament. But first, and above all else, he places the opium reforms. Unless this curse can be checked, and at least partially removed, there is no hope of progress.

Throughout this magnificent struggle for a new China, Viceroy Yuan has radically opposed the very spirit and genius of his race; but far from ostracizing himself or splitting the government, he has grown steadily in power and influence, until now, as a sort of prime minister, he appears to hold the substance of imperial authority in his hands. Try to imagine a self-made, reform politician outwitting and beating down the traditions of Tammany Hall in New York City, multiply his difficulties by a thousand or two, and you will perhaps have some notion of the sheer ability of this great man, who has risen

above the traditions, even above the age-old prejudices of his own people. There are many Europeans in his retinue—physicians, military men, engineers, educators—all of whom apparently look up to him as a genuine superior. An *attaché* summed up for me this feeling which Yuan inspires in those who know him; "You forget to think of him as a Chinaman," said this *attaché*, "as in any way different from the rest of us."

The viceroy took a personal hand in the Tientsin situation. On December 2, 1906, he issues the following document to the North and South Police Commissioners of Tientsin native city. Rather than alter the quaint wording, I quote just as it was translated for me :

"I have just received instructions from the cabinet ministers enjoining me to act according to the regulations which they presented to the throne, and which received their Majesties' consent. The evil effects of opium are known to all. It is the duty of us all to act according to the regulations, and do our utmost to get rid of them.

"The North and South police commissioners are authorized to close the opium dens, which



have been the refuge of idle hands and young people who are not allowed to smoke at home. The said dens are to be closed at the end of the Tenth Moon (December 14th), at the same time notifying the keepers of restaurants and wine shops not to have opium-smoking instruments or opium prepared for their customers, nor are their customers allowed to take opium and smoke there.

"As to the concessions, the Customs Taotai is authorized to open conference with the different consuls, asking them to close the opium dens within a limited time."

The two police commissioners at once made the proclamation public; and, as is evident from the following "Reply to a petition," met with difficulties in enforcing it:

"It is impossible to change the date of closing dens. What is said in the petition, that the keepers cannot square their accounts with their customers, may be true, but the viceroy's order must be obeyed. The dens shall be closed at the specified time."

These orders were carried out. It is one of the advantages of a patriarchal form of government that orders can be carried out. There were no injunctions, no writs to show cause, no

technical appeals. The few den keepers who dared to violate the prohibition were mildly punished on the first offense—most of them receiving two full weeks at hard labour. The real responsibility was placed upon the owners of the property rented out to the den keepers. It was recognized that these owners were the ones who really profited by the vice. They were given an opportunity to report any violations occurring on their property; but if a violation occurred, and the owner failed to report, his property was promptly confiscated. Here we see successfully employed a method which we in this country have been unable as yet to put into effect. The futility of punishing engineers and switchmen for the sins of railroad corporations, of punishing clerks for the offenses of bank directors, of punishing keepers of disorderly houses in cases where we know that the real profit goes, in the form of a high rental, to the respectable owner of the property, has long been recognized among us. In China, while we see much that seems intolerable in the enforcement of law, we must admit that it is refreshing to find laws really enforced, and to see responsibility sometimes put where it belongs. We of the United States are

far ahead of the Chinese in all that goes to make up what we call civilization. But we have, among others, a law forbidding the sale of liquor on Sundays in New York City. We couldn't enforce the law if we tried; and we haven't enough moral courage to strike it off the books for the dead letter it is.

Yes, the Tientsin situation has its refreshing side. Yuan Shi K'ai—a Chinaman,—set about it to close the opium dens that supplied this swarming cityful of Chinamen, and succeeded. He solved that most difficult problem which confronts human governments everywhere—in every climate, under every sky—the problem of moral regulation. He drove the manufacturers of opium and of opium accessories out of business. He cut his way through a tangle of "interests," vested and otherwise, not so different in their essence from the liquor interests of this country. Thanks to his own character and resource, thanks to the cheerful directness of Chinese methods of governing (when directness and not indirectness is really wanted), he "got results." And not only in Tientsin native city, but also in Peking, and Pao-ting-fu, and all Chili Province, and throughout Shansi Province, and

over large portions of Shantung, Shansi, and Manchuria. It was not a case of Maine prohibition, or Kansas prohibition, or New York excise regulation. He closed the dens!

While he was accomplishing this result, and while the native Chamber of Commerce was appropriating a sum of money to found a hospital for the cure of opium victims, the "Customs Taotai," obeying the viceroy's instructions, courteously requested the consuls, as rulers of the foreign city, to help along by closing the dens in their municipalities. It was mainly to see whether or not the consuls were "helping" that I went down to Tientsin. There was no need to ask questions or to burrow among statistics. The opium dens of the concessions were either or they were not. Accordingly, I set out from the Astor House at nine o'clock one evening, by rickshaw. For interpreter I had Mr. Sung, the secretary of the Native Young Men's Christian Association, and with us went a young Englishman who spoke the language. This test seemed a fair one to apply, for it was April 23d, nearly five months after Viceroy Yuan's proclamation, and several weeks after the closing of the last dens in the native city.

We began with the French concession; and our first glimpses of the thriving opium business of the little municipality astonished us. The Taiku Road, the main street, where one finds churches, mission compounds, offices, and shops, displayed a row of red lights. Our three rickshaws pulled up at the first and we went in.

An opium den usually takes up one floor of a building. Against the walls is a continuous wooden platform, perhaps two feet high and extending over seven or eight feet into the room. This platform is divided at intervals of five or six feet by low partitions, sometimes but a few inches in height, into compartments, each of which accommodates two smokers, with one lamp between them. Sometimes a rug or a bit of matting is laid on this hard couch, sometimes not; for the Chinaman, accustomed to sleeping on bricks, prefers his couches hard. A man always lies down to smoke opium; for the porous pill, which is pressed into the tiny orifice of the pipe, cannot be ignited, but is held directly over the lamp and the flame drawn up through it.

The first den we entered was on the second floor of a rickety building. We climbed the steep, infinitely dirty stairway, crossed a narrow hall,

and opened a door. At first I found it difficult to see distinctly in the dim light and through the thick blue haze; and the overpowering, sickish fumes of the drug got into my nose and throat and made breathing a noticeable effort. There was a desk by the door, behind which sat the keeper of the den, with a litter of pipes and thimble-like cups before him. In a corner of the desk was a jar of opium, a thick, sticky substance, dark brown in colour, in appearance not unlike molasses in January. There were twenty smokers on the couches, some preparing the pellet of opium by kneading it and pressing it on the pipe-bowl, some dozing off the fumes, and a few smoking. An attendant moved about the room with fresh supplies of the drug. For each thimbleful, enough for one or two smokes, the price was fifteen cents (Mexican).

The smokers seemed to be mainly of the lower classes; though hardly so low as coolies, who are lucky to earn as much as fifteen cents in a day. It was evident to both of my companions, from the appearance of these men and from their talk, that they could ill afford the luxury. The number of smokes indulged in seemed to range from three or four up to an indefinite

number. The youngest and healthiest appearing man in the room told us that after three pipes he could go home and go to sleep in comfort. He had been at it less than a year, he said; and, judging from the expression of peaceful content that came over his face as he held the pipe-bowl over the lamp and drew the smoke deep into his lungs, he had not yet begun to feel the ravages of the drug.

The next den we entered was small, crowded, and dirty. The price was only ten cents. But the third den was the largest and decidedly the most interesting of any that we saw. Like the others, it was situated in a prosperous section of the Taiku Road, with its red light conspicuously displayed over the door. From the facts that it was frankly open for business and that not the slightest concern was shown at our entrance, it seemed fair to believe that the keepers had no fear whatever of publicity or of the law. Even when we announced ourselves to be investigators, our questions were answered cheerfully and fully, and the man who escorted us from room to room was apparently proud of the establishment. The couches were not all occupied, but I counted thirty-five men sitting or reclining on them.

One man had a child with him, a girl of some six or eight years of age, and when he had prepared his pipe and smoked it he permitted her to take a whiff or two. In a rear room we saw four women smoking with the men. The price of a smoke in this den was twenty-five cents.

I do not know how many opium dens were open for business in the French concession on this particular April 23d, 1907, but of those that were open I personally either entered or at least saw fifteen or sixteen, and that without attempting anything in the nature of an exhaustive search. In the Italian and Russian concessions I found about sixty dens open, mostly of a very low grade. But the worst of the concessions, in this regard, was the Austrian. Lying nearest to the native city, it had profited more largely than any of the others by the native prohibition. It seemed also to have the largest Chinese population; indeed, in appearance it was more like the quaint old Chinese city than any of the other foreign municipalities.

We entered only three of the Austrian dens. But we saw the signs and glanced in through the doorways of so many others that I was quite ready to accept Mr. Sung's rough estimate of the



total number within the narrow confines of the concession : he put it at fifty to one hundred. It is difficult to be exact in these estimates, because where laws are so languidly enforced the official returns hardly begin to state the full number of flourishing establishments. These three dens which we entered were enough to make an ineffaceable impression on the mind of one traveller. I have eaten and slept in native hosteleries, in the interior, so unspeakably dirty and insanitary that to describe them in these pages would exceed all bounds of taste, but I have never been in a filthier place than at least one of these Austrian dens. And the other two were little better. It would require some means more adequate than pen, ink, and paper, to convey to the reader an accurate notion of the mingled, half-blended odours which seemed to underlie, or to form a background for, the overpowering fumes of what passed here for opium. What this drug compound was I really do not know ; but it was sold at the rate of two pipes for three cents, Mexican, equivalent to a cent and a half, gold. For real opium, of fair or good quality, it is quite possible, in China, to pay from ten to twenty times as much. Such dens as this, then, are not only

vicious resorts maintained for the purpose of catering to a degrading habit; they are also breeding places of disease and pestilence.

Thus one night's work made it plain that the foreign concessions were taking no steps that would evidence a spirit of coöperation with the Chinese authorities in their vigorous attempt to check and control the ravages of opium. Tientsin, like Shanghai, did not care. Tientsin, like Shanghai, is sowing the wind in China.

Let us now turn aside for a moment to consider the third important point of contact between the two kinds of civilization—Hongkong.

Hongkong is neither a "settlement" nor a "concession." It is a British crown colony, with its own government and its own courts. The original property, a mountainous island lying near the mouth of the Canton River, was taken from the Chinese in 1842, as a part of the penalty which China had to pay for losing the Opium War. Later, a strip of the mainland opposite was added to the colony. Hongkong is one of the most important seaports in the world. It is the meeting place for freight and passenger ships from North America, South America, New Zealand and Australia, India, Europe, Africa,

and the Philippines and other Pacific islands. It commands the trade of the Canton River Valley, which, though not geographically so imposing as the wonderful valley of the Yangtse, supports, nevertheless, the densely populated region reached by the innumerable canal-like branches of the river. The city of Canton alone, eighty or ninety miles inland from Hongkong, claims 2,500,000 inhabitants. It is safe to say that fifty million Chinamen are constantly under the influence of the civilizing example set by Hongkong.

What is the attitude of the Colonial government towards the opium question? Simply that the opium habit is a legitimate source of revenue. The British gentlemen who administer the government seem never to have been disturbed by doubts as to the morality or humanity of their attitude. Let me quote from the report of the Philippine Commission :

" Farming is the system adopted (renting out the monopoly control of the drug to an individual or a corporation) and a considerable part of the income of the colony is obtained from this source. The habit seems to be spreading. No effort—except the increased price demanded by the farmer to compensate for the increased price

he has to pay to secure the monopoly—is made to deter persons from using opium in the colony. Most of the opium comes from India."

The attitude of the residents and merchants of the colony seems to be expressed plainly enough by an editorial in a leading Hongkong paper which lies before me, dated December 1, 1906: "It will take volumes of imperial edicts to convince us that China ever honestly intends or is ever likely to suppress the opium trade. It is up to China to take the initiative in such a way as to leave no doubt that her intentions are honest and that the native opium trade will be abandoned. Until that is done, it is idle to discuss the question."

In other words, Hongkong refuses to consider giving up its opium revenue until the Chinese take the market away from it.

I think we may consider the point established that Great Britain is directly responsible for the introduction of opium into China, and, through the ingenuity and persistence of her merchants and her diplomats, for the growth of the habit in that country. To-day, in spite of an unmistakable tendency on the part of the Home government (which we shall consider in a later

chapter) to yield to the pressure of the anti-opium agitation in England, the government of India continues to grow and manufacture vast quantities of the drug for the Chinese trade. To-day the representatives of that government at Hongkong are profiting largely from a monopoly control of the opium importation. To-day, at Shanghai, where the British predominate in population, in trade, and in the city government, the opium evil is mishandled in a scandalous manner, and—as elsewhere—for profit. Small wonder, therefore, that other and less scrupulous foreign nations, where they have an opportunity to profit by this vicious traffic, as at Tientsin, hasten to do so.

These three great ports—Shanghai, Tientsin, and Hongkong—are in constant touch commercially with a grand total of very nearly 200,000,000 Chinese. They are, therefore, constantly exerting a direct influence on that number of Chinese minds. As I have pointed out, this influence, because it is concentrated and tangible, is much stronger than the admittedly potent influence of the widely scattered missionaries, physicians, and teachers. From the life and example of the Western nations, as they

exist at these ports, the Chinaman is drawing most of his ideas of progress and enlightenment.

In a word, the new China that we shall sooner or later have to deal with among the nations of the world is the new China that the ports are helping to make—for this new China is to-day in process of development. She is struggling heroically to digest and assimilate the Western ideas which alone can bring life and vigour to the sluggish Chinese mass. And yet, turning westward for aid, China is confronted with—Shanghai, Tientsin, and Hongkong. Turning to Britain for a helping hand in her effort to check the inroads of opium, she hears this cheerful doctrine from the one British colony which China can really see and partly understand, Hongkong—"It is up to China." Dr. Morrison has stated in one of his letters to the *Times* that Britain's attitude towards China is one of sympathy, tempered by a lack of information. One very eminent British diplomat with whom I discussed the opium question assured me that that attitude of his government was "most sympathetic." Later, in London, I found that this same government was quieting an aroused public opinion

with assurances that steps were being taken towards an agreement with China in the matter of opium. All this was in the spring and summer of 1907. Six months later, the one British colony in China, and the two great international ports, were cheerfully continuing their cynical policy of sneering at or ignoring the attempts of the Chinese to overcome their master-vice, and were cheerfully profiting by the situation.

It would perhaps seem fanciful to suggest that the great nations should unite to regulate the coast ports. It would appear obvious that such regulation, in so far as it might create a better understanding between the Chinese and the representatives of foreign civilizations with whom they must come in contact, would work to the advantage of commercial interests. Anti-foreign riots are in progress to-day in China which have their roots partly in racial misconception, partly in a long tradition of injustice and bad faith; and it is hardly necessary to suggest that an atmosphere of injustice, bad faith, and rioting is not the best atmosphere in which to carry on trade. But, nevertheless, the inevitable difficulties in the way of drawing the great nations together in the interests of a better understanding with the

Chinese people would seem to make such a solution academic rather than practical.

But, still hoping that something may be done about it, something that may lessen the likelihood of the reaping of a whirlwind in China, suppose that we alter the phrase of that Hongkong editorial and state that instead of the problem being up to China, it is distinctly up to Great Britain? Great Britain brought the opium into China. Great Britain kept it there until it took root and spread over the native soil. Great Britain has admitted her guilt, and had pledged herself by a majority vote in Parliament, and by the promises of her governing ministers, to do something about it. Suppose that Great Britain be called upon to make good her pledge? It would be an interesting experiment. All that is necessary is to cut down the production of opium in India, year by year, until it ceases altogether, and with it the exportation into China. This course would solve automatically the opium problem at Hongkong; and it would put it up to the municipal authorities at Shanghai and Tientsin in an interesting fashion. It would in no way jeopardize Britain's interest in the diplomatic balance of the Far East. It would work



for the good rather than the harm of the trade with China. And it would be the first necessary step in the arduous matter of cleaning up the treaty ports and setting a higher example to China.

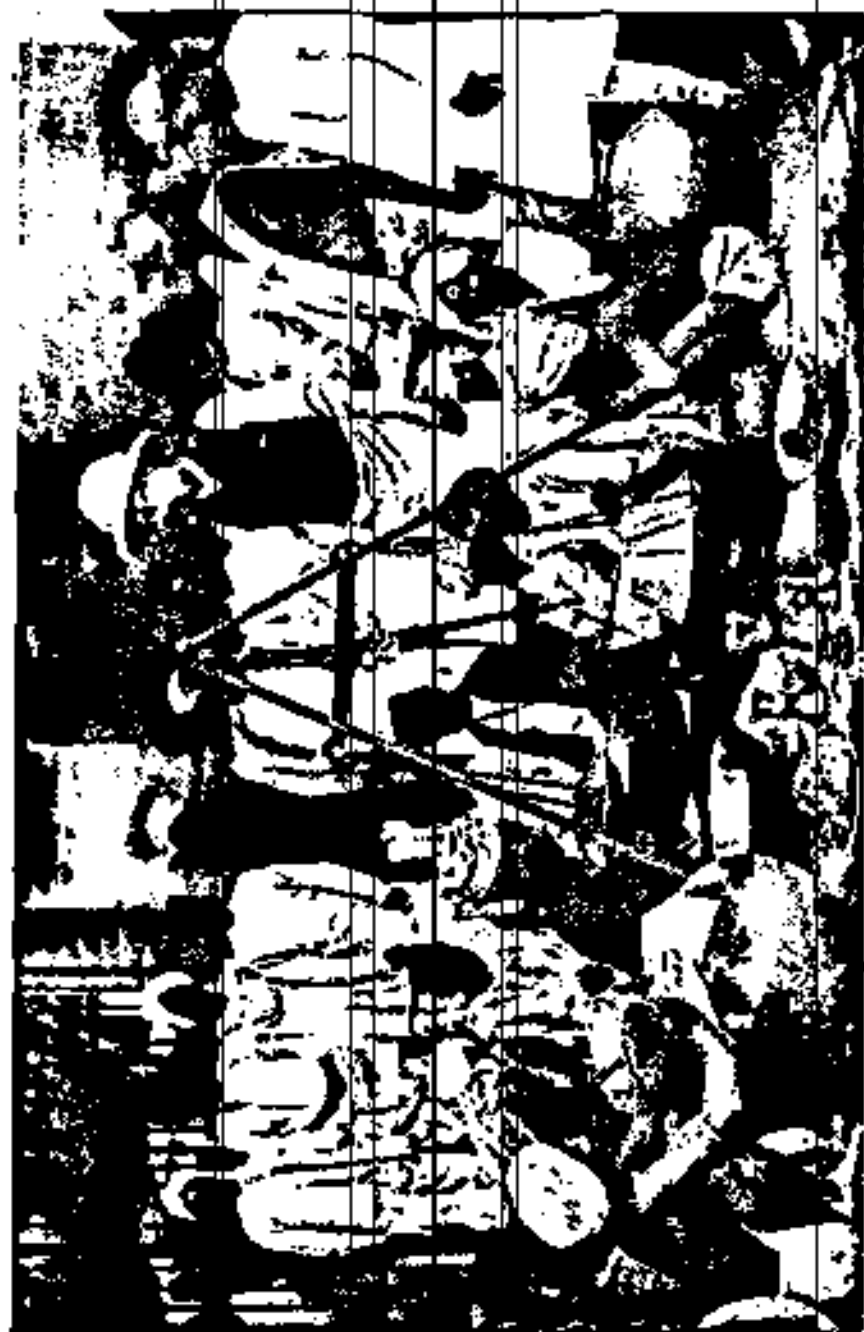
To this course Great Britain would appear to be committed by the utterances for her government. But the world, like the man from Missouri, has yet to be "shown." In a later chapter we shall consider this question of promise and performance in the light of Britain's peculiar governmental problem.

## VII

### HOW BRITISH CHICKENS CAME HOME TO ROOST

**W**E have seen, in the preceding chapters, that the Anglo-Indian government controls absolutely the production of opium in India, prepares the drug for the market in government-owned and government-operated factories, and sells it at monthly auctions. Let me also recall to the reader that four-fifths of this opium is prepared to suit the known taste of Chinese consumers. The annual value to the Anglo-Indian government of this curious industry, it will be recalled, is well over \$20,000,000.

Now we have to consider the last strong defense of this policy which the British government has seen fit to offer to a protesting world, the report of the Royal Commission on Opium. Against this stout defense of the opium traffic in all its branches, we are able to set not only the findings of other governments, such as those of Japan, the Philippines, and Australia, which have



WEIGHING OPIUM IN A GOVERNMENT FACTORY, INDIA



opium problems of their own to deal with, but also the curious attitude of a certain British colony, amounting almost to what might be called an opium panic, on that occasion when the Oriental drug found its way near enough home to menace British subjects and British children.

The men who administer the government of India have a chronically difficult job on their hands. In order to keep it on their hands they have got to please the British public; and that is not so easy as it perhaps sounds. It would apparently please both the government and the public if the whole opium question could be thrown after the twenty thousand chests of Canton—into the sea. But the British public is hard-headed, and proud of it; and the spectacle of the magnificent, panoplied government of India gone bankrupt, or so embarrassed as to be calling upon the Home government for aid, would not please it at all. Of the two evils, debauching China or gravely impairing the finances of India, there has been reason to believe that it would prefer debauching China. That, at least, is what successive governments of Britain and of India seem to have concluded. It has seemed wiser to endure a known quantity of abuse for sticking to opium

than to risk the cold British scorn for the bankrupt; and, accordingly, the Indian government with the approval of one Home government after another, has stuck to opium. The only alternative course, that of developing a new, healthy source of revenue to supplant opium, the unhealthy, would involve real ideas and an immense amount of trouble; and these two things are only less abhorrent to the administrative mind than political annihilation itself.

But there came a time, not so long ago, when a wave of "anti-opium" feeling swept over England, and the British public suddenly became very hard to please. Parliament agreed that the idea of a government opium monopoly in India was "morally indefensible," and even went so far as to send out a "Royal Commission" to investigate the whole question. Now this commission, after travelling twenty thousand miles, asking twenty-eight thousand questions, and publishing two thousand pages (double column, close print) of evidence, arrived at some remarkable conclusions. "Opium," says the Royal Commission, "is harmful, harmless, or even beneficial, according to the measure and discretion with which it is used. . . . It is [in India] the universal

household remedy. . . . It is extensively administered to infants, and the practice does not appear, to any appreciable extent, injurious. . . . It does not appear responsible for any disease peculiar to itself." As to the traffic with China, the Commission states—"Responsibility mainly lies with the Chinese government." And, finally (which seems to bring out the pith of the matter), "In the present circumstances the revenue derived from opium is indispensable for carrying on with efficiency the government of India."

To one familiar with this extraordinary summing-up of the evidence, it seems hardly surprising that the Rt. Hon. John Morley, the present Secretary of State for India, should have said in Parliament (May, 1906)—"I do not wish to speak in disparagement of the Commission, but somehow or other its findings have failed to satisfy public opinion in this country and to ease the consciences of those who have taken up the matter."

The methods employed by a Royal Commission which could arrive at such remarkable conclusions could hardly fail to be interesting. The Government opium traffic was a scandal. Parlia-

ment was on record against it. There was simply nothing to be said for opium or for the opium monopoly. It was "morally indefensible"—officially so. It was agreed that the Indian government should be "urged" to cease to grant licenses for the cultivation of the poppy and for the sale of opium in British India. This was interesting—even gratifying. There was but one obstacle in the way of putting an end to the whole business; and that obstacle was, in some inexplicable way, this same British government. The opium monopoly, morally indefensible or not, seemed to be going serenely and steadily on. If the Indian government was urged in the matter, there was no record of it.

Two years passed. Mr. Gladstone, the great prime minister, deplored the opium evil—and took pains not to stop or limit it. Like the House of Peers in the Napoleonic wars, he "did nothing in particular—and did it very well." So the vigilant crusaders came at the government again. In June, 1893, Mr. Alfred Webb moved a resolution which (so ran the hopes of these crusaders) the most nearly Christian government could not resist or evade. Sure of the anti-opium majority, the new resolution, "having regard to



the opinion expressed by the vote of this House on the 10th of April, 1891, that the system by which the Indian opium revenue is raised is morally indefensible, . . . and recognizing that the people of India ought not to be called upon to bear the cost involved in this change of policy," demanded that "a Royal Commission should be appointed . . . to report as to (1) What retrenchments and reforms can be effected in the military and civil expenditures of India; (2) By what means Indian resources can be best developed; and (3) What, if any, temporary assistance from the British Exchequer would be required in order to meet any deficit of revenue which would be occasioned by the suppression of the opium traffic."

The crusaders had underestimated the parliamentary skill of Mr. Gladstone. He promptly moved a counter resolution, proposing that "this House press on the Government of India to continue their policy of greatly diminishing the cultivation of the poppy and the production and sale of opium, and demanding a Royal Commission to report as to (1) Whether the growth of the poppy and the manufacture and sale of opium in British India should be prohibited. . . .

(4) The effect on the finances of India of the prohibition . . . taking into consideration (a) the amount of compensation payable; (b) the cost of the necessary preventive measures; (c) the loss of revenue. . . . (5) The disposition of the people of India in regard to (a) the use of opium for non-medical purposes; (b) their willingness to bear in whole or in part the cost of prohibitive measures."

Mr. Gladstone's resolution looked, to the unthinking, like an anti-opium document. He doubtless meant that it should, for in his task of maintaining the opium traffic he had to work through an anti-opium majority. Mr. Webb's resolution, starting from the assumption that the government was committed to suppressing the traffic, called for a commission merely to arrange the necessary details. Mr. Gladstone's resolution raised the whole question again, and instructed the commission not only to call particular attention to the cost of prohibition (the shrewd premier knew his public!), not only to find out if the victims of opium in India wished to continue the habit, but also threw the whole burden of cost on the poverty-stricken people of India—which he knew perfectly well they could not bear. The

original resolution had sprung out of a moral outcry against the China trade. Mr. Gladstone, in beginning again at the beginning, ignored the China trade and the effects of opium on the Chinese.

But more interesting, if less significant than this attitude, was the suggestion that the Indian government "continue their policy of greatly diminishing the cultivation of the poppy." Now this suggestion conveyed an impression that was either true or false. Either the Indian government was putting down opium or it was not. In either event, if Mr. Gladstone was not fully informed, it was his own fault, for the machinery of government was in his hands. The best way to straighten out this tangle would seem to be to consult the report of Mr. Gladstone's commission. This commission, on its arrival in India, found no trace of a policy of suppressing the trade. Sir David Balfour, the head of the Indian Finance Department, said to the commission: "I was not aware that that was the policy of the Home government until the statement was made. . . . The policy has been for some time to sell about the same amount every year, neither diminishing that amount nor increasing

it. I should say decidedly, that at present our desire is to obtain the maximum revenue from the opium consumed in India." As regarded the China trade, Sir David added: "We will not largely increase the cultivation because we shall be attacked if we do so." And this—"We have adopted a middle course and preserved the *status quo* with reference to the China trade."

Mr. Gladstone's resolution was adopted by 184 votes to 105, the anti-opium crusaders voting against it. And the Royal Commission, with instructions not, as had been intended, to arrange the details of a plan for stopping the opium traffic, but with instructions to consider whether it would pay to stop it, and if not, whether the people of India could be made to stand the loss, started out on its rather hopeless journey.

One thing the crusaders had succeeded in accomplishing—they had forced the government to send a commission to India. They had got one or two of their number on the body. The commission would have to hear the evidence, would be forced to air the situation thoroughly, showing a paternal government not only manufacturing opium for the China trade, but actually, since 1891, manufacturing pills of opium mixed

with spices for the children and infants of India. If the Indian government, now at last brought to an accounting, wished to keep the opium business going, they could do two things—they could see that the "right" sort of evidence was given to the commission, and they could try to influence the commission directly. They adopted both courses; though it appears now, to one who goes over the attitude of the majority of the commission and especially of Lord Brassey, the chairman, as shown in the records, that little direct influence was necessary. Lord Brassey and his majority were pro-opium, through and through. The Home government had seen to that.

The problem, then, of the administrators of the Indian government and of this pro-opium commission was to defend a "morally indefensible" condition of affairs in order to maintain the revenue of the Indian government. It was a problem neither easy nor pleasant.

The Viceroy of India was Lord Lansdowne. He went at the problem with shrewdness and determination. His attitude was precisely what one has learned to expect in the viceroys of India. A later viceroy, Lord Curzon, has

spoken with infinite scorn of the "opium faddists." Lord Lansdowne approached the business in the same spirit. He began by sending a telegram from his government to the British Secretary of State for India, which contained the following passage: "We shall be prepared to suggest non-official witnesses, who will give independent evidence, but we cannot undertake to specially search for witnesses who will give evidence against opium. We presume this will be done by the Anti-Opium Society." This message had been sent in August, 1893, but it was not made public until the 18th of the following November. On November 20th Lord Lansdowne sent a letter to Lord Brassey, "which," says Mr. Henry J. Wilson, M. P., in his minority report, "was passed around among the members [of the commission] for perusal. It contained a statement in favour of the existing opium system, and against interference with that system as likely to lead to serious trouble. This appeared to me a departure from the judicial attitude which might have been expected from Her Majesty's representatives."

From this Mr. Wilson goes on, in his report, to lay bare the methods of the Indian govern-

ment in preparing evidence for the commission. To say that these methods show a departure from the expected "judicial attitude" is to speak with great moderation. It is not necessary, I think, to weary the reader with the details of these extended operations. That is not the purpose of this writing. It should be enough to say that Lord Lansdowne and his Indian government ordered that all evidence should be submitted to the commission through their offices; that only pro-opium evidence was submitted; that a government official travelled with the commission and openly worked up the evidence in advance; that the minority members were hindered and hampered in their attempts at real investigation, and were shadowed by detectives when they travelled independently in the opium-producing regions; and, finally, that Lord Brassey abruptly closed the report of the commission without giving the minority members an opportunity to discuss it in detail. The result of these methods was precisely what might have been expected. Opium was declared a mild and harmless stimulant for all ages. No home, in short, was complete without it.

There is an answer to the report of the Royal

Commission on opium more telling than can be found in speeches or in minority reports. In an earlier article we examined into the beginnings of opium. We saw how it is grown and manufactured; how it passes out of the hands of the British government into the currents of trade; how it is carried along on these currents—small quantities of it washing up in passing the Straits and the Malay Archipelago—to China; how it blends at the Chinese ports in the flood of the new native-grown opium and divides among the trade currents of that great empire until every province receives its supply of the "foreign dirt." Now let us follow it farther; for it does not stop there.

The Chinese are great traders and great travellers. The weight of the national misery presses them out into whatever new regions promise a reward for industry. They swarmed over the Pacific to America in a yellow cloud until America, in sheer self-defense, barred them out. They swarmed southward to Australia until Australia closed the doors on them. They swarm to-day into the Philippines and into Malaysia. In the Straits Settlement, in a total population of a little over half a million, more



than half (282,000) are Chinese. When America would build the Panama Canal, her first impulse is to import the cheap Chinese labourer, who is always so eager to come. When Britain took over the Transvaal she imported 70,000 Chinese labourers. And where the Chinese travel, opium travels too.

The real answer to the Royal Commission on opium should be found in the attitude of these countries which have had to face the opium problem along with the Chinese problem. Let us include in the list Japan, a country which has had a remarkable opportunity to view the opium menace at short range. What Japan thinks about opium, what Australia and the Transvaal and the United States think, what the Philippines think, is more to the point than any first-hand statements of a magazine reporter. We will take Japan first. Does Japan think that opium is invaluable as a general household remedy? Does Japan think that opium is good for children?

Here is what the Philippine Opium Commission, whose report is accepted to-day as the most authoritative survey of the opium situation, has to say about opium in Japan:

"Japan, which is a non-Christian country, is

the only country visited by the committee where the opium question is dealt with in the purely moral and social aspect. . . . Legislation is enacted without the distraction of commercial motives and interest. . . . No surer testimony to the reality of the evil effects of opium can be found than the horror with which China's next-door neighbour views it. . . . The Japanese to a man fear opium as we fear the cobra or the rattlesnake, and they despise its victims. There has been no moment in the nation's history when the people have wavered in their uncompromising attitude towards the drug and its use, so that an instinctive hatred possesses them. China's curse has been Japan's warning, and a warning heeded. An opium user in Japan would be socially a leper.

" The opium law of Japan forbids the importation, the possession, and the use of the drug, except as a medicine ; and it is kept to the letter in a population of 47,000,000, of whom perhaps 25,000 are Chinese. So rigid are the provisions of the law that it is sometimes, especially in interior towns, almost impossible to secure opium or its alkaloids in cases of medical necessity. . . . The government is determined to keep

the opium habit strictly confined to what they deem to be its legitimate use, which use even, they seem to think, is dangerous enough to require special safeguarding.

"Certain persons are authorized by the head official of each district to manufacture and prepare opium for medicinal purposes. . . . That which is up to the required standard (in quality) is sold to the government; and that which falls short is destroyed. The accepted opium is sealed in proper receptacles and sold to a selected number of wholesale dealers (apothecaries) who in turn provide physicians and retail dealers with the drug for medicinal uses only. It can reach the patient for whose relief it is desired only through the prescription of the attending physician. The records of those who thus use opium in any of its various forms must be preserved for ten years.

"The people not merely obey the law, but they are proud of it; they would not have it altered if they could. It is the law of the government, but it is the law of the people also. . . . Apparently, the vigilance of the police is such that even when opium is successfully smuggled in, it cannot be smoked without detection.

The pungent fumes of cooked opium are unmistakable, and betray the user almost inevitably.

. . . There is an instance on record where a couple of Japanese lads in North Formosa experimented with opium just for a lark; and though they were guilty only on this occasion, they were detected, arrested, and punished."

That is what Japan thinks about opium.

The conclusions of this Philippine Commission formed the basis of the new opium prohibition in the Philippines, which went into effect March 1, 1908. The plan is a modification of the Japanese system of dealing with the evil.

Australia and New Zealand have also been forced to face the opium problem. New Zealand, by an act of 1901, amended in 1903, prohibits the traffic, and makes offenders liable to a penalty not exceeding \$2,500 (£500) for each offense. In the Australian Federal Parliament the question was brought to an issue two or three years ago. Petitions bearing 200,000 signatures were presented to the parliament, and in response a law was enacted absolutely prohibiting the importation of opium, except for medicinal uses, after January 1, 1906. All the state governments of Australia lose revenue by this

prohibition. The voice of the Australian people was apparently expressed in the Federal Parliament by Hon. V. L. Solomon, who said: "In the cities of the Southern States anybody going to the opium dens would see hundreds of apparently respectable Europeans indulging in this horrible habit. It is a hundredfold more damaging, both physically and morally, than the indulgence in alcoholic liquors."

That is what Australia and New Zealand think about opium.

The attitude of the United States is thus described by the Philippine Commission: "It is not perhaps generally known that in the only instance where America has made official utterances relative to the use of opium in the East, she has spoken with no uncertain voice. By treaty with China in 1880, and again in 1903, no American bottoms are allowed to carry opium in Chinese waters. This . . . is due to a recognition that the use of opium is an evil for which no financial gain can compensate, and which America will not allow her citizens to encourage even passively." By the terms of this treaty, citizens of the United States are forbidden to "import opium into any of the open

ports of China, or transport from one open port to any other open port, or to buy and sell opium in any of the open ports of China. This absolute prohibition . . . extends to vessels owned by the citizens or subjects of either power, to foreign vessels employed by them, or to vessels owned by the citizens or subjects of either power and employed by other persons for the transportation of opium." Thus the United States is flatly on record as forbidding her citizens to engage, in any way whatever, in the Chinese opium traffic.

The last item of expert evidence which I shall present from the countries most deeply concerned in the opium question is from that British colony, the Transvaal. Were the subject less grim, it would be difficult to restrain a smile over this bit of evidence—it is so human, and so humorous. For a century and more, Anglo-Indian officials have been kept busy explaining that opium is a heaven-sent blessing to mankind. It is quite possible that many of them have come to believe the words they have repeated so often. Why not? China was a long way off—and India certainly did need the money. The poor official had to please the sovereign people back home,



WHERE THE CHINAMAN TRAVELS, OPIUM  
TRAVELS TOO

A Consignment of Opium from China to the United States,  
Photographed in the Custom House, San Francisco





one way or another. If a choice between evils seemed necessary, was he to blame? We must try not to be too hard on the government official. Perhaps opium *was* good for children. Keep your blind eye to the telescope and you can imagine anything you like.

The situation was given its grimly humorous twist when the monster opium began to invade regions nearer home. It came into the Transvaal after the Boer War, along with those 70,000 Chinese labourers. The result can only be described as an opium panic. I quote, regarding it, from that "Memorandum Concerning Indo-Chinese Opium Trade," which was prepared for the debate in Parliament during May, 1906:

"The Transvaal offers a striking illustration of the old proverb as to chickens coming home to roost.

"On the 6th of September, 1905, Sir George Farrar moved the adjournment of the Legislative Council at Pretoria, to call attention to 'the enormous quantity of opium' finding its way into the Transvaal. He urged that 'measures should be taken for the immediate stopping of the traffic.' On 6th October, an ordinance was issued, restricting the importation of opium to

registered chemists, only, according to regulations to be prescribed by permits by the lieutenant-governor—under a penalty not exceeding £500 (\$2,500), or imprisonment not exceeding six months.

" Any person in possession of such substance . . . except for medicinal purposes, unless under a permit, is liable to similar penalties. Stringent rights of search are given to police, constables, under certain circumstances, without even the necessity of a written authority.

" The under-secretary for the colonies has also stated, ' that the Chinese Labour Importation Ordinance, 1904, has been amended to penalize the possession by, and supply to, Chinese labourers of opium.' "

Apparently opium is not good for the children of South Africa. That it would be good (to get still nearer home) for the children and infants of Great Britain, is an idea so monstrous, so horrible, that I hardly dare suggest it. No one, I think, would go so far as to say that the Royal Commission would have reached those same extraordinary conclusions had the problem lain in Great Britain instead of in far-off India and China. Walk about, of a sunny afternoon, in

Kensington Gardens. Watch the ruddy, healthy children sailing their boats in the Round Pond, or playing in the long grass where the sheep are nibbling, or running merrily along the well-kept borders of the Serpentine. They are splendid youngsters, these little Britishers. Their skins are tanned, their eyes are clear, their little bodies are compactly knit. Each child has its watchful nurse. What would the mothers say if His Majesty's Most Excellent Government should undertake the manufacture and distribution of attractive little pills of opium and spices for these children, and should defend its course not only on the ground that "the practice does not appear to any appreciable extent injurious," but also on the ground that "the revenue obtained is indispensable for carrying on the government with efficiency"?

What would these British mothers say? It is a fair question. The "conservative" pro-opiumist is always ready with an answer to this question. He claims that it is not fair. He maintains that the Oriental is different from the Occidental—racially. Opium, he says, has no such marked effect on the Chinaman as it has on the Englishman, no such marked effect on the

Chinese infant as it has on the British infant. I have met this "conservative" pro-opiumist many times on coasting and river steamers and in treaty port hotels. I have been one of a group about a rusty little stove in a German-kept hostelry where this question was thrashed out. Your "conservative" is so cock-sure about it that he grows, in the heat of his argument, almost triumphant. At first I thought that perhaps he might be partially right. One man's meat is occasionally another man's poison. The Chinese differ from us in so many ways that possibly they might have a greater capacity to withstand the ravages of opium.

It was partly to answer this question that I went to China. I did not leave China until I had arrived at an answer that seemed convincing. If, in presenting the facts in these columns, the picture I have been painting of China's problem should verge on the painful, that, I am afraid, will be the fault of the facts. It is a picture of the hugest empire in the whole world, fighting a curse which has all but mastered it, turning for aid, in sheer despair, to the government, that has brought it to the edge of ruin. Strange to say, this British government, as it is to-

day constituted, would apparently like to help. But, across the path of assistance stands, like a grotesque, inhuman dragon,—the Indian Revenue.

## VIII

### THE POSITION OF GREAT BRITAIN

**A**N observant correspondent recently wrote from Shanghai to a New York newspaper: "China has missed catching the fire of the West in the manner of Japan, and has lain idle and supine while neighbour and foreigner despoiled her. Her statesmanship has been languid and irresolute, and her armies slow and spiritless in the field. Observers who know China, and are familiar at the same time with the symptoms of opium, say that it is as if the listless symptoms of the drug were to be seen in the very nation itself. Many conclude that the military and political inertia of the Chinese is due to the special prevalence of the opium habit among the two classes of Chinamen directly responsible: both the soldiers and the scholars, among whom all the civil and political posts are held in monopoly, are notoriously addicted to opium."

The point which these chapters should make

clear is that opium is the evil thing which is not only holding China back but is also actually threatening to bring about the most complete demoralization and decadence that any large portion of the world has ever experienced. It is evident, in this day of extended trade interests, that such a paralysis of the hugest and the most industrious of the great races would amount to a world-disaster. Already the United States is suffering from the weakness of the Chinese government in Manchuria, which permits Japan to control in the Manchurian province and to discriminate against American trade. This discrimination would appear to have been one strong reason for the sailing of the battleship fleet to the Pacific. If this relatively small result of China's weakness and inertia can arouse great nations and can play a part in the moving of great fleets, it is not difficult to imagine the world-importance of a complete breakdown. Every great Western nation has a trade or territorial footing in China to defend and maintain. Every great Western nation is watching the complicated Chinese situation with sleepless eyes. Such a breakdown might quite possibly mean the unconditional surrender of China's destiny

into the hands of Japan; which, with Japan's growing desire to dominate the Pacific, and with it the world, might quite possibly mean the rapid approach of the great international conflict.

We have seen, in the course of these chapters, that China appears to be almost completely in the grasp of her master-vice. The opium curse in China is a dreadful example of the economic waste of evil. It has not only lowered the vitality, and therefore the efficiency of men, women, and children in all walks of life, but it has also crowded the healthier crops off the land, usurped no small part of the industrial life, turned the balance of trade against China, plunged her into wars, loaded her with indemnity charges, taken away part of her territory, and made her the plundering ground of the nations. She has been compelled to look indolently on while Japan, alight with the fire of progress, has raised her brown head proudly among the peoples of the West. So China has at last been driven to make a desperate stand against the encroachments of the curse which is wrecking her. The fight is on to-day. It is plain that China is sincere; she must be sincere, because her only hope lies in conquering opium. She has turned for help to



Great Britain, for Britain's Indian government developed the opium trade ("for purposes of foreign commerce only") and continues to-day to pour a flood of the drug into the channels of Chinese trade. Once China thought to crowd out the Indian product by producing the drug herself, as a preliminary to controlling the traffic, but she has never been able to develop a grade of opium that can compete with the brown paste from the Ganges Valley.

This summing up brings us to a consideration of two questions which must be considered sooner or later by the people of the civilized world :

1. Can China hope to conquer the opium curse without the help of Great Britain ?
2. What is Great Britain doing to help her ?

In attempting to work out the answer to these questions, we must think of them simply as practical problems bearing on the trade, the territorial development, and the military and naval power of the nations. We must try for the present to ignore the mere moral and ethical suggestions which the questions arouse.

First, then : can China, single-handed, possibly succeed in this fight, now going on, against the slow paralysis of opium ?

China is not a nation in the sense in which we ordinarily use the word. If we picture to ourselves the countries of Europe, with their different languages and different customs drawn together into a loose confederation under the government of a conquering race, we shall have some small conception of what this Chinese "nation" really is. The peoples of these different European countries are all Caucasians; the different peoples of China are all Mongolians. These Chinese people speak eighteen or twenty "languages," each divided into almost innumerable dialects and sub-dialects. They are governed by Manchu, or Tartar, conquerors who spring from a different stock, wear different costumes, and speak, among themselves, a language wholly different from any of the eighteen or twenty native tongues.

In making this diversity clear, it is necessary only to cite a few illustrations. There is not even a standard of currency in China. Each province or group of provinces has its own standard tael, differing greatly in value from the tael which may be the basis of value in the next province or group. There is no government coinage whatever. All the mints are

privately owned and are run for profit in supplying the local demand for currency, and the basis of this currency is the Mexican dollar, a foreign unit. They make dollar bills in Honan Province. I went into Chili Province and offered some of these Honan bills in exchange for purchases. The merchants merely looked at them and shook their heads. "Tientsin dollar have got?" was the question. So the money of a community or a province is simply a local commodity and has either a lower value or no value elsewhere, for the simple reason that the average Chinaman knows only his local money and will accept no other. The diversity of language is as easily observed as the diversity of coinage. On the wharves at Shanghai you can hear a Canton Chinaman and a Shanghai Chinaman talking together in pidgin English, their only means of communication. When I was travelling in the Northwest, I was accosted in French one day by a Chinese station-agent, on the Shansi Railroad, who frankly said that he was led to speak to me, a foreigner, by the fact that he was a "foreigner" too. With his blue gown and his black pigtail, he looked to me no different from the other natives; but he told me that he found the language

and customs of Shansi "difficult," and that he sometimes grew homesick for his native city in the South.

That the Chinese of different provinces really regard one another as foreigners may be illustrated by the fact that, during the Boxer troubles about Tientsin, it was a common occurrence for the northern soldiers to shoot down indiscriminately with the white men any Cantonese who appeared within rifle-shot.

This diversity, probably a result of the cost and difficulty of travel, is a factor in the immense inertia which hinders all progress in China. People who differ in coinage, language, and customs, who have never been taught to "think imperially" or in terms other than those of the village or city, cannot easily be led into coöperation on a large scale. It is difficult enough, Heaven knows, to effect any real change in the government of an American city or state, or of the nation, let alone effecting any real changes in the habits of men. Witness our own struggle against graft. Witness also the vast struggle against the liquor traffic now going on in a score of our states. Even in this land of ours, which is so new that there has hardly been time to

form traditions; which is alert to the value of changes and quick to leap in the direction of progress; which is essentially homogeneous in structure, with but one language, innumerable daily newspapers, and a close network of fast, comfortable railway trains to keep the various communities in touch with the prevailing idea of the moment, how easy do we find it to wipe out race-track gambling, say, or to make our insurance laws really effective, or to check the corrupt practices of corporations, or to establish the principle of local municipal ownership? To put it in still another light, how easy do we find it to bring about a change which the great majority of us agree would be for the better, such as making over the costly, cumbersome express business into a government parcels post?

But there are large money interests which would suffer by such reforms, you say? True; and there are large money interests suffering by the opium reforms in China, relatively as large as any money interests we have in this country. The opium reforms affect the large and the small farmers, the manufacturers, the transportation companies, the bankers, the commission men, the hundreds of thousands of shopkeepers, and

the government revenues, for the opium traffic is an almost inextricable strand in the fabric of Chinese commerce. In addition to these bewildering complications of the problem, there is the discouraging inertia to overcome of a land which, far from being alert and active, is sunk in the lethargy of ancient local custom.

No, in putting down her master-vice, China must not only overcome all the familiar economic difficulties that tend to block reform everywhere, but, in addition, must find a way to rouse and energize the most backward and (outside of the age-old grooves of conduct and government) the most unmanageable empire in the world.

On what element in her population must China rely to put this huge reform into effect? On the officials, or mandarins, who carry out the governmental edicts in every province, administer Chinese justice, and control the military and finances. But of these officials, more than ninety per cent. have been known to be opium-smokers, and fully fifty per cent. have been financially interested in the trade.

Still another obstacle blocking reform is the powerful example and widespread influence of the treaty ports. Perhaps the white race is

"superior" to the yellow; I shall not dispute that notion here. But one fact which I know personally is that every one of the treaty ports, where the white men rule, including the British crown colony of Hongkong, chose last year to maintain its opium revenue regardless of the protests of the Chinese officials.

Putting down opium in China would appear to be a pretty big job. The "vested interests," yellow and white, are against a change; the personal habits of the officials themselves work against it; the British keep on pouring in their Indian opium; and by way of a positive force on the affirmative side of the question there would appear to be only the lethargy and impotence of a decadent, chaotic race. How would you like to tackle a problem of this magnitude, as Yuan Shi K'ai and Tong Shao-i have done? Try to organize a campaign in your home town against the bill-board nuisance; against corrupt politics; against drink or cigarettes. Would it be easy to succeed? When you have thought over some of the difficulties that would block you on every hand, multiply them by fifty thousand and then take off your hat to Tong Shao-i and Yuan Shi K'ai. Personally, I think

I should prefer undertaking to stamp out drink in Europe. I should know, of course, that it would be rather a difficult business, but still it would be easier than this Chinese proposition.

So much for the difficulties of the problem. Suppose now we take a look at the results of the first year of the fight. There are no exact statistics to be had, but based as it is on personal travel and observation, on reports of travelling officials, merchants, missionaries, and of other journalists who have been in regions which I did not reach, I think my estimate should be fairly accurate. Remember, this is a fight to a finish. If the Chinese government loses, opium will win.

The plan of the government, let me repeat, is briefly as follows: First, the area under poppy cultivation is to be decreased about ten per cent. each year, until that cultivation ceases altogether; and simultaneously the British government is to be requested to decrease the exportation of opium from India ten per cent. each year. Second, all opium dens or places where couches or lamps are supplied for public smoking are to be closed at once under penalty of confiscation. Third, all persons who purchase opium at sale shops are to be registered, and the



amount supplied to them to be diminished from month to month. Meantime, the farmer is to be given all possible advice and aid in the matter of substituting some other crop for the poppy; opium cures and hospitals are to be established as widely as possible; and preachers and lecturers are to be sent out to explain the dangers of opium to the illiterate millions.

The central government at Peking started in by giving the high officials six months in which to change their habits. At the end of that period a large number were suspended from office, including Prince Chuau and Prince Jui.

In one opium province, Shansi, we have seen that the enforcement was at the start effective. The evidence, gathered with some difficulty from residents and travellers, from roadside gossip, and from talks with officials, all went to show that the dens in all the leading cities were closed, that the manufacturers of opium and its accessories were going out of business, and that the farmers were beginning to limit their crops.

The enforcements in the adjoining province, Chih-li, in which lies Peking, was also thoroughly effective at the start. The opium dens in all the large cities were closed during the spring.

and the restaurants and disorderly houses which had formerly served opium to their customers surrendered their lamps and implements. Throughout the other provinces north of the Yangtse River, while there was evidence of a fairly consistent attempt to enforce the new regulations, the results were not altogether satisfying. Along the central and southern coast, from Shanghai to Canton, the enforcement was effective in about half the important centers of population. In Canton, or Kwangtung Province, the prohibition was practically complete.

The real test of the prohibition movement is to come in the great interior provinces of the South, Yunnan and Kweichow, and in the huge western province of Sze-chuan. It is in these regions that opium has had its strongest grip on the people, and where the financial and agricultural phases of the problems are most acute. All observers recognized that it was unfair to expect immediate and complete prohibition in these regions, where opium-growing is quite as grave a question as opium-smoking. The beginning of the enforcement in Sze-chuan seems to have been cautious but sincere. In this one province the share of the imperial tax on opium alone,

over and above local needs, amounts to more than \$2,000,000 (gold), and, thanks to the constant demands of the foreign powers for their "indemnity" money, the imperial government is hardly in a position to forego its demands on the provinces. But recognizing that a new revenue must be built up to supplant the old, the three new opium commissioners of Sze-chuan have begun by preparing addresses explaining the evils of opium, and sending out "public orators" to deliver them to the people. They have also used the local newspapers extensively for their educational work; and they have sent out the provincial police to make lists of all opium-smokers, post their names on the outside of their houses, and make certain that they will be debarred from all public employment and from posts of honour. The chief commissioner, Tso, declares that he will clear Chen-tu, the provincial capital, a city of 400,000 inhabitants, of opium within four years; and no one seems to doubt that he will do it as effectively as he has cleared the streets of the beggars for which Chen-tu was formerly notorious. When Mr. J. G. Alexander, of the British Anti-Opium Society, was in Chen-tu last year, this same Commissioner Tso called a

mass-meeting for him, at which the native officials and gentry sat on the platform with representatives of the missionary societies, and ten thousand Chinese crowded about to hear Mr. Alexander's address.

The most disappointing region in the matter of the opium prohibition is the upper Yangtse Valley. In the lower valley, from Nanking down to Soochow and Shanghai (native city), the enforcement ranges from partial to complete. But in the upper valley, from Nanking to Hankow and above, I could not find the slightest evidence of enforcement. At the river ports the dens were running openly, many of them with doors opening directly off the street and with smokers visible on the couches within. The viceroy of the upper Yangtse provinces, Chang-chi-tung, "the Great Viceroy," has been recognized for a generation as one of China's most advanced thinkers and reformers. His book, "China's Only Hope," has been translated into many languages, and is recognized as the most eloquent analysis of China's problems ever made by Chinese or Manchu. In it he is flatly on record against opium. Indeed, when governor of Shansi, twenty odd years ago, this same offi-

cial sent out his soldiers to beat down the poppy crop. Yet it was in this viceroyalty alone, among all the larger subdivisions of China, that there was no evidence whatever last year of an intention to enforce the anti-opium edicts. The only explanation of this state of things seems to be that Chang-chi-tung is now a very old man, and that to a great extent he has lost his vigour and his grip on his work. Whatever the reason, this fact has been used with telling effect in pro-opium arguments in the British Parliament as an illustration of China's "insincerity."

The situation seems to sum up about as follows: The prohibition of opium was immediately effective over about one-quarter of China, and partially effective over about two-thirds. This, it has seemed to me, considering the difficulty and immensity of the problem, is an extraordinary record. Every opium den actually closed in China represents a victory. Whether the dens will stay closed, after the first frenzy of reform has passed, or whether the prohibition movement will gain in strength and effectiveness, time alone will tell. But there is an ancient popular saying in China to this effect, "Do not fear to go slowly; fear to stop."

We have seen, then, that while the Chinese are fighting the opium evil earnestly, and in part effectively, they are still some little way short of conquering it. Also, we must not forget, that all reforms are strongest in their beginnings. The Chinese, no less than the rest of us, will take up a moral issue in a burst of enthusiasm. But human beings cannot continue indefinitely in a bursting condition. Reaction must always follow extraordinary exertion, and it is then that the habits of life regain their ascendancy. Remarkable as this reform battle has been in its results, it certainly cannot show a complete, or even a half-complete, victory over the brown drug. And meantime the government of British India is pouring four-fifths of its immense opium production into China by way of Hongkong and the treaty ports. It should be added, further, that while the various self-governing ports, excepting Shanghai, have very recently been forced, one by one, to cover up at least the appearance of evil, the crown colony of Hongkong, which is under the direct rule of Great Britain, is still clinging doggedly to its opium revenues. The whole miserable business was summed up thus in a recent speech in the House of Commons :

"The mischief is in China; the money is in India."

What is Great Britain doing to help China? His Majesty's government has indulged in a resolution now and then, has expressed diplomatic "sympathy" with its yellow victims, and has even "urged" India in the matter, but is it really doing anything to help?

There are reasons why the world has a right to ask this question.

If China is to grow weaker, she must ultimately submit to conquest by foreign powers. There are nine or ten of these powers which have some sort of a footing in China. No one of them trusts any one of the others, therefore each must be prepared to fight in defense of its own interests. It is not safe to tempt great commercial nations with a prize so rich as China; they might yield. Once this conquest, this "partition," sets in, there can result nothing but chaos and world-wide trouble.

The trend of events is to-day in the direction of this world-wide trouble. The only apparent way to head it off is to begin strengthening China to a point where she can defend herself against conquest. The first step in this strengthening proc-

ess is the putting down of opium—there is no other first step. Before you can put down opium, you have got to stop opium production in India. And therefore the Anglo-Indian opium business is not England's business, but the world's business. The world is to-day paying the cost of this highly expensive luxury along with China. Every sallow morphine victim on the streets of San Francisco, Chicago, and New York is helping to pay for this government traffic in vice.

But is Great Britain planning to help China?

The government of the British empire is at present in the hands of the Liberal party, which has within it a strong reform element. From the Tory party nothing could be expected; it has always worshipped the Things that Are, and it has always defended the opium traffic. If either party is to work this change, it must be that one which now holds the reins of power. And yet, after generations of fighting against the government opium industry on the part of all the reform organizations in England, after Parliament has twice been driven to vote a resolution condemning the traffic, after generations of statesmen, from Palmerston through Gladstone to John



Morley, have held out assurances of a change, after the Chinese government, tired of waiting on England, has begun the struggle, this is the final concession on England's part :

The British government has agreed to decrease the exportation of Indian opium about eight per cent. per year during a trial period of three years, in order to see whether the cultivation of the poppy and the number of opium-smokers is lessened. Should such be the case, exportation to China will be further decreased gradually.

The reader will observe here some very pretty diplomatic juggling. There is here none of the spirit which animated the United States last year in proposing voluntarily to give up a considerable part of its indemnity money. The British government is yielding to a tremendous popular clamour at home ; but nothing more. Could a government offer less by way of carrying out the conviction of a national parliament to the effect that " the methods by which our Indian opium revenues are derived are morally indefensible " ? The English people are urging their government, the Chinese are diplomatically putting on pressure, the United States is organizing an international opium commission on the ground that the

nations which consume Indian and Chinese opium have, willy-nilly, a finger in the pie. And by way of response to this pressure the British government agrees to lessen very slightly its export for a few years, or until the pressure is removed and the trade can slip back to normal!

There are not even assurances that the agreement will be carried out. While this very agitation has been going on, since these chapters began to appear in *Success Magazine*, the annual export of Bengal opium has increased (1906-1908) from 96,688 chests to 101,588 chests. And it is well to remember that after Mr. Gladstone, as prime minister, had given assurances of a "great reduction" in the traffic, the officials of India admitted that they had not heard of any such reduction.

A few months ago, the Government issued a "White Paper" containing the correspondence with China on the opium question, so that there is no dependence on hearsay in this arraignment of the British attitude. Let us glance at an excerpt or two from these official British letters. This, for example:

"The Chinese proposal, on the other hand, which involves extinction of the import in nine

years, would commit India irrevocably, and in advance of experience, to the complete suppression of an important trade, and goes beyond the underlying condition of the scheme, that restriction of import from abroad, and reduction of production in China, shall be brought *pari passu* into play."

Not content with this rather sordid expression, His Majesty's Government goes on to point out that, under existing treaties, China cannot refuse to admit Indian opium; that China cannot even increase the import duty on Indian opium without the permission of Great Britain; that before Great Britain will consider the question of permanently reducing her production China must prove that the number of her smokers has diminished; that the opium traffic is to be continued at least for another ten years; and then indulges in this superb deliverance:

The proposed limitation of the export to 60,000 chests from 1908 is thought to be a very substantial reduction on this figure, and the view of the Government of India is that such a standard ought to satisfy the Chinese Government for the present.

Even by their own estimate, after taking out

the proposed total decrease of 15,300 chests in the Chinese trade, the Indian Government will, during the next three years, unload more than 170,000 chests of opium on a race which it has brought to degradation, which is to-day struggling to overcome demoralization, and which is appealing to England and to the whole civilized world for aid in the unequal contest.

We must try to be fair to the gentlemen-officials who see the situation only in this curious half-light. "It is a practical question," they say. "The law of trade is the balance-sheet. It is not our fault as individuals that opium, the commodity, was launched out into the channels of trade; but since it is now in those channels, the law of trade must rule, the balance-sheet must balance. Opium means \$20,000,000 a year to the Indian Government—we cannot give it up."

The real question would seem to be whether they can afford to continue receiving this revenue. Opium does not appear to be a very valuable commodity in India itself. Just as in China, it degrades the people. The profits in production, for everybody but the government, are so small that the strong hand of the law has often, nowadays, to be exerted in order to keep

the *ryots* (farmers) at the task of raising the poppy. There are many thoughtful observers of conditions in India who believe it would be highly "practical" to devote the rich soil of the Ganges Valley to crops which have a sound economic value to the world.

But more than this, the opium programme saps India as it saps China. The position of the Englishman in India to-day is by no means so secure that he can afford to indulge in bad government. The spirit of democracy and socialism has already spread through Europe and has entered Asia. In Japan, trade-unions are striking for higher wages. In China and India, are already heard the mutterings of revolution. The British government may yet have to settle up, in India as well as in China, for its opium policy. And when the day for settling up comes, it may perhaps be found that a higher balance-sheet than that which rules the government opium industry may force Great Britain to pay—and pay dear.

Yes, the world has some right to make demands of England in this matter. China can make no real progress in its struggle until the Indian production and exportation are flatly abolished.

The situation has distinctly not grown better since the magazine publication of the first of these chapters, a year ago. If the reader would like to have an idea of where Great Britain stands to-day on the opium business, he can do no better than to read the following excerpts from a speech made last spring by the Hon. Theodore C. Taylor, M. P., on his return from a journey round the world, undertaken for the purpose of personally investigating the opium problem.

First, this :

"We shall not begin to have the slightest right to ask that China should give proof of her genuineness about reform until we show more proof of our own genuineness about reform, and until we suppress the opium traffic where we can. China has taken this difficult reform in hand. She has done much, but not everything. In Shanghai, Hongkong, and the Straits, we have done nothing at all. I want to say this morning, as pricking the bubble of our own Pharisaism, that from the point of view of reform, the blackest opium spots in China are the spots under British rule."

And then, in conclusion, this :

"I am convinced, and deeply convinced, as

every observant and thoughtful man is that knows anything of China, that China is a great coming power. I was talking to a fellow member of the House of Commons who lately went to China, and went into barracks and camps with the Chinese, and who made it his business to study Chinese military affairs, which generally excite so much laughter outside China. He spent a good deal of time with the Chinese soldier. He said to me, as many other people have said to me, 'The Chinaman is splendid raw material as a soldier, and, if his officers would properly lead the Chinaman, he would follow and make the finest soldier in the world, bar none.' It will take China a long, long time to organize herself; it will take her a long time to organize her army and navy; it will take a long time to get rid of the system of bribery in China, which is one of the hindrances to putting down the opium traffic; but, depend upon it, the time is coming, not perhaps very soon, but by and by—and nations have long memories—when those who are alive to see the development of China will be very glad that, when China was weak and we were strong, we, of our own motion, without being made to, helped China to get away from this terrible curse."

## Appendix—A Letter from the Field

### THE OPIUM CLIMAX IN SHANGHAI

*Editor "Success Magazine"*

It is fitting that in the columns of *Success*, a magazine which has so recently investigated and so thoroughly and ably reported upon the opium curse in China, there should appear the account of a unique ceremony held in the International Settlement of Shanghai, illustrating in a striking manner the general feeling of the Chinese towards the anti-opium movement and setting an example that will make its influence felt in the most remote provinces of the empire. In response to liberal advertising there assembled in the spacious grounds of Chang Su Ho's Gardens, on the afternoon of Sunday, May 3, 1908, some two or three thousand of Shanghai's leading Chinese business men, together with a goodly sprinkling of Europeans and Americans, to witness the destruction of the opium-pipes, lamps, etc., taken from the Nan Sun Zin Opium Palace. In America, such a scene as this would have appeared little less than a farce, but here the obvious earnestness of the Chinese, the great value of the property to be destroyed and the deep meaning of this sacrifice, should have been sufficient to put the blush of shame upon the cheeks of the Shanghai voters and councilmen,



who, representing the most enlightened nations of the earth, have compromised with the opium evil and permitted three-fourths of this nefarious business to linger in the "Model Settlement" when it has been so summarily dealt with by the native authorities throughout the land.

Within a roped-in, circular enclosure, marked by two large, yellow Dragon-Flags, were stacked the furnishings of the Opium Palace, consisting of opium boxes, pipes, lamps, tables, trays, etc., and as the spectators arrived the work of destruction was going rapidly on. Two native blacksmiths were busily engaged in splitting on an anvil the metal fittings from the pipes, and a brawny coolie, armed with a sledge-hammer, was driving flat the artistic opium lamps as they were taken from the tables and placed on the ground before him. Meanwhile the pipes, mellowed and blackened by long use and many of them showing rare workmanship, were dipped into a large tin of kerosine and stacked in two piles on stone bases, to form the funeral pyre, while the center of each stack was filled in with kindling from the opium trays, similarly soaked with oil. On one of the tables within the enclosure were two small trays, each containing a complete smoking outfit and a written sheet of paper announcing that these were the offerings of Mr. Lien Yue Ming, manager of the East Asiatic Dispensary, and Miss Kua Kuei Yen, a singing girl, respectively. Both these quondam smokers sent in their apparatus to be burned, with a pledge that henceforth they would abstain from the use of the drug.

During the preparations for the burning, Mr. Sun

Ching Foong, a prominent business man, delivered a powerful exhortation on the opium evil to the enthusiastic multitude and introduced the leading speaker of the afternoon, Mr. Wong Ching Foo, representing the Committee of the Commercial Bazaar. Mr. Wong spoke in the Mandarin language and stated that all of China was looking to Shanghai for a lead in the matter of suppressing opium and that it was with great pleasure the committee had noticed the earnest desire of the foreign Municipal Council (and he was *not* intending to be *sarcastic*!) to assist the Chinese in their endeavour to do away entirely with this traffic. It was a very commendable effort, and he was sure the foreigners there would agree that no effort on their part could be too strong to do away with this curse, which was not only undermining the best intellects of China, but by the example of parents was affecting seriously the rising generation. To-day a gentleman, who had been a smoker for twenty-nine years and had realized the great harm it had done him, was present, and had brought with him his opium utensils to be destroyed with those from the opium saloons of French-town. The Nan Sun Zin Opium Palace, from which the pipes and other opium utensils had been brought for destruction, was the largest in Shanghai and, he had heard, the largest in China, patronized by the most notable people. The example of Shanghai was felt in Nanking, Peking, and all over China, for the young men who visited here took with them the report of the pleasures they saw practiced in this settlement and thus gave the natives different ideas. These young men often came here to see the wonder-

ful work accomplished by foreigners, and it was not right that they should take this curse back with them. It had been originally intended to burn also the chairs and tables from the palace, but as this would make too large and dangerous a fire it had been decided to sell these and use the proceeds for the furtherance of the anti-opium movement.

Among the pipes were some for which \$500 had been offered, but the Committee of the Commercial Bazaar had purchased the whole outfit to destroy, and they hoped to be able to buy up a good many more of the palaces and thus utterly destroy all traces of the opium-smoking practice. Mr. Wong remarked that China had recently been under a cloud and in Shanghai there had been protracted rains, but to-day it was fine and it was evident that heaven was looking down upon them and blessing their efforts. With heaven's blessing they would be able to overcome the curse and be even quicker than the Municipal Council in completely wiping out this abominable custom.

As the speeches were concluded, the Chinese Volunteer Band struck up a lively air and amid the deafening din of crackers and bombs a torch was applied to the oil-soaked stacks of pipes which at once burned up fiercely. Extra oil was thrown upon the flames and the glass lamp-covers, bowls, etc., were heaped upon the flames, thus completing a ceremony full of earnestness and meaning.

It has come as a matter of great surprise to many sceptical foreigners that the Chinese should be making such strenuous efforts to do away with the opium-smoking curse. Not a few have thrown cold water

upon the scheme, sneered at the Chinese in this endeavour, and doubted both their desire and ability to suppress the sale of opium. The Commercial Bazaar Committee, consisting of well-known Chinese business men, is not only seconding the Municipal Council in its gradual withdrawal of licenses in the foreign settlements but has also accomplished the closing of many opium dens through its own efforts by bringing pressure to bear upon the owners of the dens. Already, many private individuals have given up their beloved pipes and some dens have voluntarily closed. It has also been agreed by the Chinese concerned that all of the shops run by women are to cease the sale of opium. This activity on the part of the Chinese themselves is a striking rebuke to those who cast suspicion upon the honesty of purpose of both the Chinese government and people, refusing to immediately abolish the opium licenses in the foreign settlements of Shanghai, despite the appeals from the American, British, and Japanese governments, the petitions of the leading Chinese of the place and the general popularity of the anti-opium movement. Yielding to great pressure from all sides, the Shanghai Municipal Council *did* consent to introduce a resolution upon this question before the Rate-payers Meeting to be held March 20th, but the concession made was small indeed compared with what was generally desired or what might be anticipated from the leading lights of "civilized and highly moral" nations. The resolution was as follows:—

*"Resolution VI.* That the number of licensed opium houses be reduced by one-quarter from July 7, 1908, or from such other early date and in such man-

ner as may appear advisable to the Council for 1908-1909."

While there was in this a definite reduction of one-fourth of the opium-joints in the settlement, there was nothing definite as to any future policy, though the implication was that the houses would be all closed within a period of two years. In his speech introducing this resolution before the ratepayers, the British chairman of the council said, among other things, "I feel sure that every one of us has the greatest sympathy with the Chinese nation in its effort to dissipate the opium habit, but we are not unfamiliar with Chinese official procedure, and how far short actual administrative results fall when compared with the official pronouncements that precede them. It is impossible not to be sceptical as to the intentions of the Chinese government with regard to this matter, although on this occasion we quite recognize that many officials are sincere in their desire to eradicate the opium evil, and I am sure there is every intention on the part of this community to assist them. Yet we know of no programme that they have drawn up to make this great reform possible, if indeed they have a programme. . . . The absence of these, so to speak, first business essentials, on the part of the Chinese government, was among the reasons which led us to the view that the settlement was called upon to do little more than continue its work of supervision over opium licenses, and wait for the cessation of supplies of the drug to render that supervision unnecessary. . . . The advice we have received from the British Government is, in brief, that we should do

more than keep pace with the native authorities, we should be in advance of them and where possible encourage them to follow us."

In the following quotations from a letter written by Dr. DuBose, of Soochow, President of the Anti-Opium League, to the municipal council, the attitude of the reformers is clearly shown.

"The prohibition of opium-smoking is the greatest reformation the world has ever seen, and its benefits are already patent. Let the ratepayers effectually second the efforts being made by the Chinese government to abolish the use of opium throughout the empire.

"It has proved a peaceful reformation. In the cities and towns about one-half million dens, at the expiration of six months, were closed promptly without resistance or complaint. The government will grant all the necessary privileges of inspection to the municipal police in the prevention of illicit smoking.

"The consumption of opium in the cities has fallen off thirty per cent.; in the towns fifty per cent.; while in the rural districts in the eastern and middle provinces it is reduced to a minimum. It is well for Shanghai to be allied with Soochow, Hangchow, and Nanking, and not to permit itself to be a refuge for bad men.

"The Chinese merchants in the International Settlement have sent in earnest appeals to the Council on this question. As friends of China, might not the ratepayers give their appeals a courteous consideration?

"The question of opium at the Annual Meeting commands world-wide attention and Saturday's papers

throughout Christendom will bear record of and comment upon the action.

"To close the dens is right. Shanghai cannot afford to be the black spot on Kiangsu's map. *Opium delendum est.*

"In behalf of the Anti-Opium League,  
"HAMPDEN C. DUBOSE, *President.*"

The appeals from Great Britain, America, China, and Japan, like the petitions of merchants, missionaries, and officials, were without effect. The "vested interests" carried the day, and a resolution, ordering the closing of the dens on or before the end of December, 1909, was lost by a vote of 128 to 189, the council, as usual, influencing and controlling the votes and carrying the original motion—the only concession it would grant to this gigantic movement.

Another surprise came to the cynical foreigner, when, on April 18th, the whole of the opium licensees participated in a public drawing in the town hall, to decide by lottery which establishments should be shut down on the 1st of July, numbering one-fourth of the total number, this method being adopted by the council to avoid any suspicion of partiality in the selection. The keepers of the dens cheerfully acquiesced in the proposal, the sporting chance no doubt appealing to the gambling spirit for which they are noted, and in the town hall this remarkable drawing was held without any sign of disfavour or rowdyism. The keepers of the Shanghai opium shops are no doubt thoroughly convinced that the feeling of the native community is entirely against the retention

of these places and are ready to bow to the inevitable. None of the trouble or rioting feared by the Council, materialized, and it is certain that the entire list of licenses might have been immediately revoked without disturbance of any kind—and without protest. Three hundred and fifty-nine licenses thus cease with the end of June, and it is doubtful, with the present spirit manifest in the Chinese, that such another drawing will be necessary at all. The funeral pyre of opium-pipes, we trust, marks the end, or the immediate beginning of the end, of Shanghai's reproach, and it is distinctly to the credit of the 500,000 Chinese living within the jurisdiction of this foreign community, that they themselves are taking the lead in wiping out this stain on the "Model Settlement"—doing what the foreigner *dared not* and the "vested interest" *would not* do.

CHARLES F. GAMMON.



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